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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

37 NUMBER 32 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 JANUARY 4, 1991

The New Year And Our Mission, Vision And Tasks

I usually get depressed when I go to church long-range planning sessions. Jargon words are tossed around like "goal setting," "timeline," "prioritizing." A minister friend once told me, "if I want something killed, I just give it to tbe Long-Range-Planning Committee!"

Yet, alive and vital congregations plan ahead. Planning determines what we **really** believe is important. My calendar is a gauge of my faithfulness — or lack of faithfulness.

Lovett Weems, Jr., President of Saint Paul School of Theology, has written a paper on leadership in which he clarifies the planning process.

Mission is our reason for existence as a cburcb: "what we exist to do." Vision is what God is calling us to do the next five to ten years in order to fulfill that mission. Tasks are step-by-step actions to make the vision happen.

Christian leadership — lay and clergy — is the process of guiding a church tbrough significant change in translating vision into reality, since all vision focuses on tbe future.

Peter Drucker reminds us that the task of the leader is to develop a vision around which people can have passion.

For this very reason, the College of Bishops of the South Central Jurisdiction will have a Visioning Retreat, January 2-5, as our first calendared event of the new year. For this reason, pastors and Vision 2000 committees are at work in every local church. For this reason, Conference lay and clergy leaders will gather for the Convocation of Boards, January 31-February 1.

As Louisiana United Methodism enters a new year, let us be about the painful yet exciting process of clarifying our mission as a church, of developing a vision in each local church, and implementing that vision through specific tasks. Let us do visioning as Conference Boards, Councils, and Committees. Above all, let our visions be empowered by the Holy Spirit through our tasks of evangelism, worship, nurture, outreach and all other ways we witness as the Church.

William B. Oden

Appointment Changes

Following the December Cabinet meeting, Bishop William B. Oden announced the following changes in ministerial appointments for the Louisiana Conference.

Walter L. Parr Jr. (Full Connection), from First Church (Associate), Lake Charles District, to Appointed to Attend School, Lake Charles District, effective November 1, 1990.

Ronald Paillet (Full-Time Local Pastor), Welsh, Jones-Mallalieu-Trinity, Lake Charles District, to Discontinued, effective January 1, 1991.

To All Louisiana Annual Conference Insurance Subscribers

This is to notify you that all medical and dental invoices incurred during 1990 must be sent in to the insurance company no later than March 31, 1991, in order to be eligible for the benefits. The invoices should be mailed to the following address:

Employee Benefit Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 51005
Shreveport, LA 71135-1005

1991 Insurance Premiums Are:

Family	$426.00/mo.
Single	$160.00/mo.
Medicare Supplement	$ 70.00/mo.

Important Reminder

The last day for mailing 1990 remittances on apportionments and other offerings is Monday, January 7, 1991. The envelope **must be** postmarked January 7, 1991.

Make all checks payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference and mail to:

Louisiana Annual Conference
Office of Financial Affairs
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720

In Memoriam

The Reverend Joseph M. Poledore, retired minister, died December 19, 1990, at the age of 90. Mr. Poledore is survived by six children.

On the back...

This logo will welcome participants to the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly next month in Australia. See story, Back Page.

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
SEVENTH ASSEMBLY
CANBERRA 1991

'Yes, We'll Gather At The River' The Louisiana Gathering

The Centroplex, Baton Rouge, Louisiana March 9, 1991 2:00 p.m.

The logo chosen for Tbe Louisiana Gathering is symbolic of tbe theme, "Yes, We'll Gather at the River." Water reminds us of our religious beritage: of the creation, of the exodus, of the baptism of Jesus by John, and of the woman at the well.

It is a reminder of our own baptism and of the spirit of God's grace resting on all who have been baptized into Christ's body, the Church. As we United Methodists come to Baton Rouge in March, we come to celebrate our baptism and renew our mission and ministry.

A newsletter will come soon to designated leaders of each of our congregations. This newsletter will be one of a series being used to give specific information and to give suggestions on ways to prepare for March 9. Please read it carefully and then pass on the information to your congregation.

December 30, 1990, and January 6 and January 13, 1991, have been designated as **Covenant Invitation Sundays** throughout our Louisiana churches. The invitation is for everyone. Plan now to join 10,000 otber United Methodists as we "Gather at the River."

Local Churches Celebrate Human Relations Day January 20

Human Relations Day (previously known as Race Relations Day) recalls the right of all God's children in recognizing their potential as human beings in relationships with eacb other. The purpose of the day is to further the development of better human relations . . . (1988 Book of Discipline, par. 274.1).

Human Relations Day helps to keep before congregations and communities the issues and values of racial and ethnic pluralism — so that persons may understand and appreciate each other better and see our diversity as God's gift to be affirmed and celebrated.

Local churches are encouraged to celebrate Human Relations Day through:

*Prayer and Reflection for God's guidance;

*Choir and Pulpit exchanges with churches and pastors of otber racial and ethnic backgrounds;

*Beginning new ventures in sharing through small group encounters, pot luck suppers, study and fellowship sessions;

*Taking the Human Relations Day offering.

As we celebrate tbe theme "Proclaim Release to the Captives," we remember people trapped in life's situations who seek deliverance and acceptance. The special offering received on this day supports three United Methodist programs which address dire needs and conditions in more tban 50 communities throughout tbe United States and Puerto Rico.

Community developers belp ethnic United Methodist Churches to organize residents in low-income communities. Together tbey build leadership, advocate for local needs and concerns, and create educational programs and self help opportunities.

United Methodist Voluntary Services (UMVS) undergirds a diverse network of community organizations working together with local churches to bring about justice in housing, immigration, education, the environment and other areas.

The Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program assists local church efforts to help teenage first offenders turn their lives around.

The ministries we support on Human Relations Day tear down physical, social and emotional barriers which imprison, separate and exclude people.

Through our gifts, prayers and actions we can proclaim release to the captives in our society and share Jesus' gospel of love and liberation for all of God's children.

Achievement Comes from God's Grace, says Minister

Qué Pasa New Orleans, a monthly magazine published in Spanish, has chosen a United Methodist minister as one of the outstanding Hispanic leaders in Louisiana. The Reverend Marta Sanfiel was one of twelve people honored for their contributions to their local communities at a banquet and dance at the Marriott Hotel in New Orleans on July 16, 1990.

The Reverend Sanfiel is pastor of the St. Marks-Spanish Ministries Charge in New Orleans. Born in Cuba, she and her husband, the late Reverend Juan Sanfiel, came to Louisiana in 1979 with their son Frank, who is currently a student at the University of New Orleans. Previously, Mrs. Sanfiel had assisted her father in a Spanish Ministry in New Jersey.

Since her arrival in Louisiana, Reverend Sanfiel has not only served as full-time pastor of her churches, but has written 13 lessons for "Lecciones Christianas," a Spanish-language Sunday School curriculum.

The Methodist publishing House recently published her book, **Vida Nueva en Christo,** which the editors asked her to write two years ago. These contributions, as well as her work in helping Hispanic immigrants with relocation in this country, provided the basis for her selection for the magazine's 1989 Religion Award.

In bestowing this honor, the selection committee pointed out that Mrs. Sanfiel is the only Spanisb-ordained-female minister in Louisiana.

Mrs. Sanfiel's response to this honor is that she is "humbled by God's presence in the work." She believes that her achievement "comes from the grace of God." She accepted the award, she said, in honor of her congregation which she discusses with great enthusiasm.

Mrs. Sanfiel is especially proud of the Church's youth program and excitedly reported that one of its young people was recently awarded a scholarship to a local, private high school. Fourteen teenagers from her one-hundred-member congregation attend the weekly activities on a regular basis. She wants the youngsters and their parents to know that "they can do whatever they set out to do" and stresses that point in the church's outreach ministries and work. She was especially pleased that nine of the members of her congregation secretly bought tickets to the banquet to be with her on her special night.

Although Mrs. Sanfiel jokingly complains that she has "too much work," she continues in her efforts to help the Spanish community in New Orleans with the challenges of living in a new community and, as she says, to make them aware that the United Methodist Church by God's grace can be and is an important part of the community's life.

Around The Conference

New Louisiana United Methodist missionaries, Sebastian and Karen Ujereh, recently shared visions of mission during the Sunday School and morning worship service at Hartzell Mount Zion United Methodist Church in Slidell. The Ujereh's are pictured with Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell, pastor, who encouraged them to enter missionary service. The Ujereh's are related to Bethany United Methodist Church, New Orleans.

Recently, the Commission on Church and Society of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge hosted an authentic American Pot Luck dinner for Louisiana State University international students and their sponsors. After dinner, students and sponsors shared some of their experiences.

The Commission on Church and Society also sponsors a loan closet in conjunction with LSU which offers needed household items for loan to international students while they are attending the university.

Pictured are a few of the guests who attended the American Pot Luck dinner.

Pat Rice (right) Lay Leader of Lakeview United Methodist Church, Shreveport, is pictured presenting to Charles C. Keller, the first recipient of the Charles Keller Laity Award for outstanding discipleship within the church and community. The Reverend Doug Cain is pastor.

The congregation of Fisher United Methodist Church in the North Shore District has a new sign to display. The sign was designed and constructed by a church member, Mr. Ray Ourso, who is pictured at right with Mr. Tim Brown, Chairman of the Administrative Board. Ms. Kay Bell, a member of Centenary United Methodist Church, painted the sign. The Reverend Willis Dear is pastor of the two-church charge.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

Cruzan case: Cause for gratitude

The odyssey of Nancy Cruzan, albeit tragic, clarified at least one aspect of the euthanasia/"right to die" debate (see UMR, Dec. 28 and elsewhere in this issue).

Ms. Cruzan died Dec. 26 after a judge ruled that life-prolonging treatment could legally be removed from her. Her parents had begun seeking permission to stop her intravenous feeding after her condition lapsed into a "persistent vegetative state" following a car accident eight years ago.

The Cruzans' reason for taking such a drastic step was grounded in their contention that their daughter "died" in the accident. In their view, her continuing bodily functions were devoid of authentically human life.

The Cruzans' agonizing battle to allow their child to "die with dignity" had at least one constructive result that should benefit others facing similar circumstances.

Namely, the U.S. Supreme Court heard their case last June and ruled that competent people have a right to refuse life-sustaining medical treatment if "clear and convincing evidence," such as a "living will," exists showing that they have so chosen.

We affirm the Cruzan ruling on moral as well as legal grounds.

It is consistent both with Christian compassion and with our church's teachings that support "the right of every person to die in dignity ... without efforts to prolong terminal illnesses merely because the technology is available to do so" (United Methodist Book of Discipline, Par. 71H).

The Cruzan case won't end controversy about the morality of euthanasia, nor should it. Human life is too precious a gift from God to settle for merely legal answers to complex moral questions about when and if life may be ended.

We as Christians, however, should offer a prayer of thanksgiving that this chapter of the Cruzan family's excruciating ordeal is over and that it has yielded a compassionate legal precedent.

One clear lesson for us all: If we haven't considered a "living will" that states our wishes regarding medical treatment should we be incapacitated, we should do so and urge others to do likewise.

. . . and equal cause for concern

A down side to the Nancy Cruzan case is the calloused way in which critics, including many professing to be Christians, harassed the Cruzan family and vilified court rulings permitting their daughter to die (see above).

Consider:

■ "We were coming down the Supreme Court steps and the Cruzans were surrounded by reporters and protesters," an official at the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society recalled. "Some protesters carried signs that pictured dripping blood. They shouted at Mr. Cruzan: 'Why are you killing your daughter?' "

■ A Virginia-based anti-euthanasia group, among others, charged that the Cruzans and their doctors were "accomplices to murder."

■ Demonstrators dogged the Cruzans as they kept an around-the-clock vigil at their daughter's hospital bedside.

We should vigorously uphold the right of free speech. However, neither truth nor justice is well served when "right to die" issues are contested in a climate of finger-pointing acrimony and cruelty.

As followers of One who often challenged conventional wisdom about life and death, Christians should be actively involved in the public debate about euthanasia and similar life-and-death issues.

Among our contributions should be to insist that how the debate is conducted is no less germane than how it is resolved.

It matters deeply that we not only speak the truth as we see it, but that we do so "in love."

That is, we should not only seek to support the morally right position, but we should do so with a spirit of compassion for any who may be painfully affected by what we advocate.

What others are saying

'War would be a disaster for us all'

EDITOR'S NOTE: A delegation of high-ranking U.S. church leaders returned recently from a week-long trip to the Middle East (see UMR, Dec. 28). The following assessment of what they found is excerpted from a three-page statement that they issued upon their return to the United States.

We are marching toward war. Indeed the stakes are horribly high. Military experts predict casualties in the tens and hundreds of thousands. And it won't end there.

War would unleash a chain of human tragedies that will be with us for generations to come.

Our Christmas pilgrimage to the Middle East has utterly convinced us that war is not the answer. We believe the resort to massive violence to resolve the Gulf crisis would be politically and morally indefensible.

One clear message emerged from our many conversations in these holy lands — "War would be a disaster for us all . . ."

We have concluded that in the Middle East today it is no longer only a question of right and wrong; it is also a matter of life and death.

The unspeakable loss of lives, especially innocent civilians, would be unacceptable on moral grounds. Nations hold in their hands weapons of mass destruction. It is entirely possible that war in the Middle East will destroy everything. No cause will be served, no crisis resolved, no justice secured.

War will not liberate Kuwait, it will destroy it.

War will not save us from weapons of mass destruction, it will unleash them.

War will not establish regional stability, it will inflame the entire Middle East.

War will not resolve longstanding conflicts, it will explode them wider and deeper.

War will not unite the Arabs with the West, it will rekindle painful historical memories of past efforts by the "Christian" West to dominate the "Muslim" East and divide us as never before, with potentially disastrous results for the local Christian communities. . . .

While we do not accept the proposition that the resolution of all other conflicts must precede the solution of the Gulf crisis, we do believe that there will be no lasting peace in the region until interrelated issues are dealt with in a comprehensive framework. . . .

Having seen the faces of victims and potential victims, we believe that there must be an alternative to war. That alternative is negotiations —serious and substantive negotiations. If the United Nations can be mobilized to impose sanctions and to set deadlines, it can also be mobilized to provide a forum to resolve disputes between nations. . . .

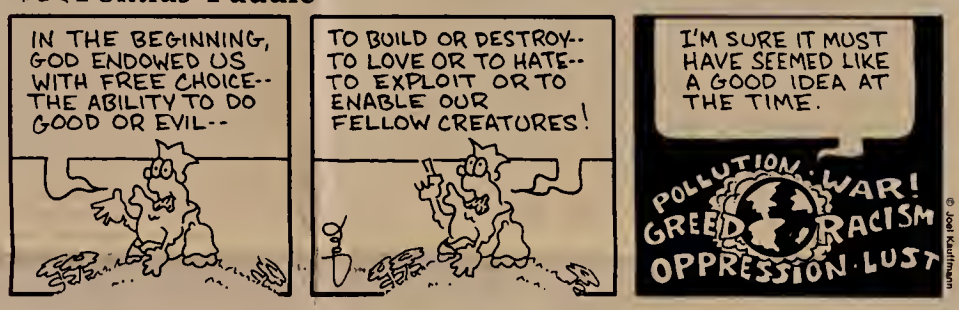
We call upon the churches and upon the nation to fast and pray for peace, to pursue every means available of public dialogue and popular expression to find a way out of certain catastrophe, to resist the war option and help point the way to peace with justice.

At this moment, the resolution of the Gulf crisis will take a miracle. But in this season we are reminded that the Middle East is the cradle of miracles. That miracle must be acted and prayed into being.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

An Israeli child stands beside a friend wearing a gas mask—a fact of life for many in the Middle East as the region faces possible war. U.S. church leaders recently returned from the region contend "that there must be an alternative to war."

Pontius' Puddle



Here I Stand

Good news exists in battle to save the environment

By GERALD L. FARRAR

The United Methodist stand on protection of the environment is outlined in a resolution adopted by the 1984 General Conference.

Succinctly stated, it is the responsibility of United Methodists to do all they can to prevent air pollution and/or water and soil pollution.

No one is opposed to these goals in principle, but all too often only lip service is paid.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Gerald L. Farrar is a member of Boston Avenue United Methodist Church, Tulsa, Okla. (Oklahoma Annual Conference).

Worse than lip service is careless talk about how the environment is hopelessly becoming more and more polluted, and nothing can be done to reverse the trend.

By contrast, the President's Council on Environmental Quality in its Twentieth Annual Report disclosed these findings for the United States over the 20-year period, 1970-90:

■ Total annual emissions of lead declined 96 percent.

■ Total annual emissions of sulfur dioxide dropped 28 percent.

■ Total annual emissions of carbon monoxide fell 38 percent.

■ Total annual emissions of hydrocarbons declined 28 percent.

■ Total annual particulate emissions dropped 61 percent.

■ Total annual carbon dioxide emissions have increased by an annual rate of 1.4 percent since 1970.

In the words of Michael Deland, chairman of the Council, the U.S. has "essentially stabilized its carbon dioxide emissions."

We should find it refreshing and encouraging to learn that something is, in fact, being done to reduce pollution of our environment.

My Witness

TV experience makes incarnation even more real

By ROBERT C. MORWELL

Recently, I participated in the "Light for the World" Christmas Eve telecast that linked Grace United Methodist Church in Decatur, Ill. with the Peace United Methodist Church (Friedenskirche) in Berlin, Germany.

The service was broadcast across the United States and Germany.

My part in the service included reading these words from John's Gospel:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

A few verses later, John goes on to declare: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

After our telecast, I gained new insight into the incarnation . . . the mysterious process whereby the unseen God became a flesh and blood person.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Robert C. Morwell is pastor of Mount Pulaski United Methodist Church, Springfield, Ill. (Central Illinois Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

In a sense, we had reversed the process of incarnation. We had transformed our faces, our words, and the thoughts behind them, into electromagnetic waves.

Bishops were transfigured

Bishops, pastors, choirs and congregations were transfigured into insubstantial energy, equally capable of passing through empty space or solid walls in order to appear simultaneously in tens of thousands of homes on at least two continents.

We have been rendered "immortal" by this transformation. Somewhere in the vast universe, we will always be riding those television signals, singing "Silent Night" or "Stille Nacht," even after our sun has gone cold.

If we can transform a bit of ourselves into waves of energy that can encircle the world and span the universe, is it too much to believe that the unseen God also exists eternally in a form we cannot apprehend with our physical senses?

If a country preacher like myself can be beamed into the homes and lives of millions of people at the same moment, is it so hard to believe that God could be present in all of those places, and many more?

If we can transform some portion of our lives into waves of energy that cannot be touched by human fingers, heard by human ears, or seen by human eyes . . . is it so hard to believe that the invisible God could reverse that process and become visible and touchable?

Logos is creative energy

The Word becomes flesh. The Word, in Greek, is "logos." John borrowed the concept of the "logos" from Greek philosophers who used it to describe the creative energy and organizing principle that built the universe.

Energy and principles rarely make themselves visible. But John says they did so in Jesus, who gave flesh and a face to these unseen forces.

Some folks find that hard to believe. But, there was a time when most people thought it was impossible to ride invisible waves of energy into the lives of millions around the world, or into the depths of the universe. Despite their doubts, we did just that this past Christmas Eve.

I don't find it hard to believe that, despite our doubts, the invisible God could ride a bit of flesh into the lives of millions around the world, or into the depths of the human heart.

It's hard to believe that a loving God would not do so.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (RSV)

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
_____	___ :	_____

(Last week's answer: Luke 15:7)

Readings for week of Jan. 7

Monday: Psalms 72:1-11
Tuesday: Psalms 72:12-19
Wednesday: Isaiah 60:1-6
Thursday: Isaiah 60:19-22
Friday: Matthew 2:1-12
Saturday: Matthew 2:13-15
Sunday: Ephesians 3:1-12

Letters to the Editor

Bishop's views were political, not spiritual

Bishop Melvin G Talbert's remarks in the Dec. 14 issue should be identified as personal political, not spiritual, views.

Iraq invaded and looted Kuwait, raped, murdered, took babies from incubators, and held innocent hostages. But the bishop says the President of the United States "is becoming a real aggressor . . ." if he goes to their aid.

His warning, "we are on the brink of nuclear war," is not supported by objective analysis. While nuclear war is not imminent, we may have to fight or else give Kuwaiti children to the evil dictator.

United Methodists see the real Middle East aggressor. I'm afraid the bishop's personal politics have clouded his view.

Joseph E. McDaniels
Holladay, Tennessee

Problem or paranoia?

The story has been told of an evangelist who came into a small church and preached a week of meetings on "sin." After the last sermon, a young man enthusiastically approached him and burst out, "I never knew what sin was 'til you came to town!"

I thought about this as I read about the study of sexual harassment in the Nov. 30 Reporter. The "unwanted look" or "touch" were discussed, among other things.

I have a feeling if one of those who reported this problem in the survey were to discuss it with a sister who said she felt none of these things, the enlightened sister would condescendingly explain, "You just have to be on the lookout all the time! You'll be bound to see it." And she probably will.

It seems like we may be expanding a real problem into paranoia.

Fred W. Norman
Punta Gorda, Florida

The United Methodist REPORTER

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Send letter of application, resume, and four references with phone numbers to: Dr. Paul Van Buren, BHEM, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202 (FAX (615) 340-7048). Must be received by March 11, 1991.

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL DUKE UNIVERSITY
DUKE UNIVERSITY DIVINITY SCHOOL seeks nominations and applications for a tenured position of Professor of Church and Society and Director of the J. M Ormond Center for Research, Planning, and Development. Requirements include: an earned Ph.D. in an appropriate discipline; graduate-professional theological education and ordination in the United Methodist Church; experience in pastoral ministry; experience in administration and management, demonstrated skills in theoretical research and practical consultation services; appropriate publications indicating sustained interested and expertise in the field related to the position. Teaching fields might include: church and society; church administration; sociology of religion; church and ministry; United Methodist polity. Director will be responsible for the educational leadership and administrative management of the Ormond Center which renders: service, through research useful to the Church; education, in training students and pastors; and research of a theoretical nature concerning church and society, with special, though not exclusive, attention to rural and small-membership churches. Appointment effective for the academic year 1991-92. Materials should be sent to Mrs. Clara Godwin, Director of General Administration and Finance, The Divinity School, Duke University, Durham, NC 27706. Duke University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Faith watch

YEAR'S TOP STORY: The easing of restrictions on religion in Eastern Europe following the fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of some Communist regimes was the top religion story of 1990, according to members of the Religion Newswriters Association.

ANOTHER VIEW: A world "more than ever divided by religious parties and by ethnic and nationalist sentiments intimately tied to religious beliefs" was the top religion story of 1990, in the opinion of "The Christian Century" magazine's editors. Ranked second was the revival of religion, particularly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

CHANGE PROTESTED: A recent change in procedures for members of the armed forces seeking conscientious objector status has drawn a protest from the Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett, head of United Methodism's social-action agency. Individuals now must comply with reassignment orders before applying for the status. One man affected by the change is Sgt. George Morse, a lifelong United Methodist from Grayling, Mich. After being denied conscientious objector status and disobeying orders to set up and inspect a set of cots to be shipped to the Persian Gulf, he was reportedly court martialed and sentenced to five months in the Fort Riley, Kan., stockade.

Thom Fassett

DEADLINE PASSES: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) officials say recent votes by local congregations deliberating on whether to remain in the 2.9-million-member denomination are running even, with six churches voting to remain and six voting to leave. The votes were taken under a provision in the 1983 merger of the "northern" and "southern" Presbyterian churches, resulting in creation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). That provision allows congregations of the southern branch to withdraw from the new denomination, with their property, upon a vote by a congregation to affiliate with any other denomination of the Reformed tradition. Dec. 6 was the filing deadline for those wishing to consider withdrawal.

'NEWSMAKER' NAMED: Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, whose regime passed freedom of worship legislation and permitted reopening of thousands of closed churches in the Soviet Union, has been chosen "Religion Newsmaker of the Year" for the second year in a row. The selections are made via a poll of members of the Religion Newswriters Association. The association is made up of some 150 reporters who cover religion for the secular press.

DECISION HAILED: The federal government, after a decade of efforts to deport undocumented Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants and reprisals against churches that granted them sanctuary, has agreed to stop the deportations and adopt new procedures for granting political asylum. The agreement comes as a settlement to a class-action lawsuit brought by 80 religious and refugee organizations that formed the backbone of the American sanctuary movement, which arose in the early 1980s to protect Central American refugees. Supporters of the sanctuary movement hailed the settlement as clear vindication of a cause that had led to the criminal conviction of some church workers and infiltration of religious gatherings by agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Compiled from news and staff reports

'Army' of Christians heads for WCC Assembly

Prayerful responses to global issues to be focus of ecumenical gathering in Australia

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

As armies gather ominously in the Middle East to prepare for war, an army with peaceful purposes—an "army" of Christians—is preparing to mobilize next month in another part of the world: Australia.

Nearly 3,500 Christians from around the globe, including more than 200 United Methodists, will descend Feb. 7-20 on Canberra, Australia, for the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Concerns related to the mounting crisis in the Persian Gulf will be on the assembly's agenda, according to World Council chief executive, the Rev. Emilio Castro, a Uraguayan Methodist.

The agenda also will include other global issues such as the environment, land rights and poverty.

But the worldwide ecumenical body's approach to such matters will be more spiritual than combative, more prayerful than political, and, council officials hope, more unifying than divisive.

"Come, Holy Spirit—Renew the Whole Creation" is the theme for the upcoming every-seven-year meeting of the agency based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Rev. Bruce Robbins, chief executive of United Methodism's top ecumenical agency, said he expects that United Methodists who attend the assembly will subsequently help broaden denominational understanding of global community.

"The assembly provides an opportunity to listen to and interact with other people who are part of the body of Christ," said Dr. Robbins. He heads the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

Dr. Robbins said that, although very few United Methodists actually can attend the World Council assembly in Canberra, the meeting is important for people in the pews.

"All of us Christians are trying to hear what God is calling us to today," Dr. Robbins said. The World Council, he said, provides the community of faith with an opportunity to come together from all across the globe "to discern God's will."

He added that his agency is compiling a list of all United Methodists who are going to Canberra and will share the list with annual conference ecumenical officers.

"We'll urge them to share the list with local churches so they can invite people to share what they experience at Canberra," Dr. Robbins said.

The assembly's 1,000 voting delegates will represent the council's 311 member churches, including The United Methodist Church. The delegates will be divided roughly half-and-half between clergy and laypersons and include about 40 percent women and 15 percent youth.

During the two-week meeting, delegates will review the World Council's work, set program policies and outline new directions for the next seven years.

Noting the threat of war in the Persian Gulf, Dr. Castro said he would be delighted if, "in February, when we meet, there will still be a chance to discuss possibilities for peace."

This report is based in part on a United Methodist News Service release.

This is the official symbol of the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly scheduled Feb. 7-20 in Canberra, Australia. The symbolism includes a dove of peace, a sail from the "ship" of ecumenism and a portion of the gull-wing shape of one of Australia's most famous buildings, the Opera House in Sydney.

Woman's death sends 'right-to-die' issue to new era

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Controversy surrounding the death of Nancy Cruzan, whose United Methodist family fought for three years to release her from enforced life prolongation, has pushed the "right-to-die" issue into new territory.

That's an assessment from some of those involved in events leading up to the 33-year-old woman's death Dec. 26.

"The overall feeling is relief," said the Rev. Ted Coleman, pastor of First Christian Church of Mount Vernon, Mo. Since July he has been a volunteer chaplain at Missouri Rehabilitation Center, where Ms. Cruzan died. He has counseled her parents, Lester E. (Joe) and Joyce Cruzan of Carterville, Mo., during their daughter's dying days.

'We've crossed a line'

"I think there's a period of time when not just this community but the nation, too, will have to process what happened here," he continued. "I think we've crossed a line. I think we have to decide where we go from here."

The Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett, top executive of the church's General Board of Church and Society, sent the family condolences that said in part:

"Your witness of love and caring and [Nancy's] enormous sacrifice have changed the history of this nation."

The United Methodist social-action agency had supported the Cruzans in their battle all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn Missouri laws preventing them from allowing their daughter to die.

Intense protests

The three-year legal drama began to move toward a close Dec. 14 when a probate judge ordered the removal of Ms. Cruzan's surgically implanted feeding tube. The order was based on new evidence that she would not wish to live in the persistent vegetative state that had been her condition since a 1983 car wreck.

Intense protests—the first of their kind to be directed against a family in a right-to-die case—followed almost immediately. Demonstrators dogged Ms. Cruzan's parents as they kept an around-the-clock vigil at their daughter's bedside.

Mr. Coleman, the hospital chaplain, said: "I met with protesters, because they knew I had access to the family. A group of protesters got as far as the hallway outside Nancy's door. They knelt in prayer and remained there quietly. They were removed because they were in the way."

Hospital spokeswoman Barbara Shoun said of the protesters: "[Ms. Cruzan's dying] was traumatic as it was, and the protesters just made it more so. No matter how you stood in this, those protesters hurt everybody."

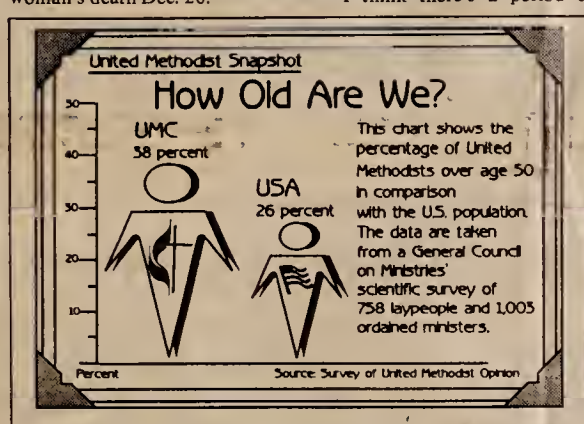
The intensity of the final protests was such that representatives of four religious denominations issued a statement Dec. 21 criticizing the demonstrations.

Signing the statement were representatives of The United Methodist Church, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and The Unitarian Universalist Association.

A memorial service for Ms. Cruzan was scheduled for Dec. 28. The Rev. Robert Clyde, pastor of Carterville (Mo.) United Methodist Church where the Cruzan family are members, was to officiate.

The family has established the Nancy Cruzan Memorial Fund to benefit charities to be named at a later date, said a spokeswoman for attorney William H. Colby of Kansas City, Mo. Mr. Colby, the Cruzans' attorney, will administer the fund.

Information from Religious News Service was used in this report.



UMR ILLUSTRATION

Information feature debuts

Welcome to "United Methodist Snapshot," a new feature of the United Methodist Reporter. The occasional feature will provide readers with brief, timely facts about The United Methodist Church in an easy-to-read illustration format. Information will be drawn from sources both within and beyond the church. Suggestions for topics of future "snapshots" are welcome. Send suggestions to "United Methodist Snapshot," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Father: 'My church is here for me'

Nancy Cruzan's family has drawn strength from the support of The United Methodist Church during their battle to allow their daughter to die, says a top church official.

Jane Hull Harvey is assistant general secretary "for the ministry of God's human community" at the church's General Board of Church and Society in Washington. The social-action board supported the Cruzans' legal battle to have life-prolonging treatment removed from their comatose daughter.

Ms. Harvey said she met Joe and Joyce Cruzan nearly two years ago when their case seeking removal of their comatose daughter's feeding tube was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

"We were coming down the Supreme Court steps and the Cruzans were surrounded by reporters and protesters," Ms. Harvey recalled for the Reporter. "Some protesters carried signs that pictured dripping blood. They shouted at Mr. Cruzan: 'Why are you killing your daughter?'

"In the crush I couldn't talk to them, so I just slipped Mr. Cruzan my business card. He looked at it, stopped and turned toward me. Then he said, 'They (protesters) may be out on the street, but my church is here for me.'

"It was a highlight of my 10 years at the [Church and Society] board," Ms. Harvey said.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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Aid chief says Africa U. has 'earmarks of success'

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Take it from a man who helped make it possible:

United Methodism's new Africa University "has all the earmarks of success."

That's the assessment of David Santos, director of the U.S. government office that awarded a $1.6 million site and building development grant for the school (see UMR, Dec. 14).

Mr. Santos directs the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, a division of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The goal of that office is to foster the transfer of American educational ideas and practices to other nations.

Adapted to African needs

Mr. Santos said he believes Africa University could result in the best of American education adapted to the needs of Africa.

"I can't stress enough how important quality, private education is for Africa," he said. "That is just what that continent is crying for. Methodists really have something they can get their teeth into in supporting this."

The grant proposal submitted by the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry "impressed not only us but outside reviewers as well," Mr. Santos said.

"It is very difficult for an applicant for a new institution to be successful, because the institution has no track record," he continued. "It's a tribute to [the board's] degree of planning and organization that they were able to be successful in a very competitive environment."

51 percent given aid

Mr. Santos said that of 91 applicants for USAID funds in the 1990 fiscal year, 51 percent were awarded grants.

The church board was awarded the grant in part, he said, because of the wealth of expertise United Methodist-related colleges and universities in this country could bring to the project.

Although it is unusual for church-affiliated institutions to receive federal grants, there is no prohibition against such grants in his section of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Mr. Santos said. In fact, about 25 percent of the institutions the agency funds are church related, he added.

However, the agency does not provide funds to build facilities for worship or for religious education. Africa University's planned School of Theology, for example, is ineligible for funds.

"We will fund facilities for secular education," Mr. Santos said.

Before any money is released, however, the board must have complete architectural drawings and a building contractor.

Bottleneck opened

Those stipulations were a bottleneck until the church's General Council of Finance and Administration recently voted to release up to $90,000 for architectural planning.

These funds were released on the strength of a letter from Zimbabwe's minister of higher education, David Karimanzira. His letter on behalf of the Zimbabwean government authorized the church to begin construction, hire faculty and carry out the necessary financial campaign to undergird the success of the university's development.

Other recent developments related to Africa University include:

■ Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe signed the National Council on Higher Education Act recently passed by that country's parliament. The act establishes an oversight panel responsible for reviewing requests to open private universities.

The Rev. Roger Ireson, chief executive for the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, said he expects the charter for Africa University to be approved by the new Zimbabwean oversight panel in early 1991.

■ The Zimbabwean architectural firm of Hope, Clark, and Peto Associates has been retained to draw the plans.

A representative of the firm came to the United States in July to study a number of American colleges, libraries and chapels.

Faith connections

RETIRING: Kiyoko Kasai Fujiu has announced her plan to retire from the general secretariat of the church's General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. A secretariat member since 1977, Ms. Fujiu will go on sabbatical March 1. Her retirement will be effective June 30. She has been primarily responsible for coordinating the monitoring of church boards, agencies and seminaries for male/female inclusiveness. Another secretariat member, the Rev. Nancy Grissom Self, also will retire June 30. Cecelia M. Long, the third secretariat member, will continue in her position.

'ELITIST THEOLOGY?': The head of the leading caucus of United Methodist evangelicals says a study published by the denomination's General Council on Ministries demonstrates that "an unrepresentative, elitist ideology" has triumphed at the national level of the church. The Rev. James V. Heidinger II, executive director of the Good News movement, says that "a small group . . . are taking those on board to destinations they haven't chosen and to which they have no interest in going. It's a betrayal of trust." Dr. Heidinger cites findings of the survey of both delegates and non-delegates to the church's 1988 legislative General Conference. The survey concluded that "clergy were consistently more liberal than lay respondents" and that "non-delegates were consistently more conservative than General Conference delegates."

Booklet proves popular

A guide to the "murky waters of United Methodist lexicon" is proving a popular resource, according to United Methodist Communications. "Speaking Connectionally" unravels such mysteries as the meanings of COSROW, MARCHA and other uniquely United Methodist terms. Copies are $1 each from United Methodist Communications, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0320.

Compiled from news and staff reports

A faith rooted in the soil

United Methodist activist's multi-faceted outreach is an outgrowth of her longtime love of the land

By DANA E. JONES

CAROL STREAM, Ill.—From organic gardening to hunger advocacy to peacemaking, Jan Smith's faith and outreach are rooted in the soil.

"My organic gardening led to my being involved as an environmentalist to caring about people who don't have resources," said Ms. Smith, a member of St. Andrew United Methodist Church in suburban Carol Stream.

"The environmentalist in me became a hunger activist and then, all of a sudden, it seemed as if everything I had done was connected under the umbrella of being a peacemaker."

Ms. Smith's love of the land and of growing things without poisoning the land has led her to an understanding that all parts of the environment are connected.

Earth a closed system

"The earth is a closed system—nothing goes out and nothing comes in except the sun," said Ms. Smith, who grew up on a Central Illinois farm.

"Our resources and our garbage are what we have; our pollutants are really resources out of place."

The logic inherent in such a concept of the earth at first blocked Ms. Smith from accepting the church.

"I went to a church-related college where I had to take religion, ethics and philosophy," she said. "That made me question what I'd been taught growing up. For a long time, I thought knowledge and reason were supreme. I couldn't accept the teachings of my Sunday-school years."

Her tie to the land, however, eventually eroded that attitude.

"Although I was not a member of any faith, if I was troubled by anything, I could walk out to the road and sit by a tree and look at the field and just feel the existence of a Creator," she said.

"I was attending church now and then and attending a Bible study class. There came a point when I realized I didn't have to have all the answers; I could take a leap of faith. God accepted me when I did that."

Leadership roles bloom

Organic gardening has led her to become coordinator of the "Hunger Busters" and peace advocate for the church's Aurora District.

She is in demand as a public speaker and instructor on her 25 years' experience in such things as composting lawn waste.

Ms. Smith encourages people to get involved in organic gardening though she acknowledges that she may overstate the ease of doing so because she's been involved in it for so long. So she has set up a consulting business to help people plant gardens and has compiled guidelines and tips on starting a compost pile.

She recommends that people begin by changing how they look at the earth and garbage, then that they pick a project like composting or recycling and get started.

And she has one more piece of advice.

"We can decide not to make some of the pollutants to begin with," she urged.

Considering that Ms. Smith led the 1967 fight against Carol Stream's use of DDT—three years before the pesticide was outlawed nationally—that advice comes from a rock-solid source.

Ms. Jones is editor of the Northern Illinois conference edition of the Reporter.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS CONFERENCE PHOTO

CAROL STREAM, Ill.—Longtime environmentalist Jan Smith's love of the land has renewed her religious faith and led her on to become an advocate on environmentally related issues such as hunger and peacemaking.

UM couple struggles to adopt Romanian child

By MARY NICHOLS

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C.—When Leah and Kris Kaase saw televised reports depicting the plight of Romanian orphans, they did more than just shake their heads. They decided to act.

The couple, who have a 20-month-old daughter, had talked about adopting a second child, somehow assuming that the child would be from southeast Asia. A report on ABC-TV's "20/20" this spring convinced them, however, to look to Romania, said Mrs. Kaase, director of Christian education for North Charleston United Methodist Church.

Since war has devastated the country and torn families apart, Romanian orphanages are overcrowded. Children who are considered abnormal are placed in asylums, where conditions are even worse.

The Kaases were aware of some of the problems.

"We first got interested in the Romanian situation in 1989," said Mr. Kaase, who directs planning and research at Charleston Southern University in Summerville. "We have been keeping an eye on it."

The adoption process has its pitfalls, the Kaases discovered. Profiteers have been known to charge exorbitant fees to well-meaning U.S. citizens and others with no guarantees of placement.

The Kaases probably would be unable to pay the enormous costs of travel and adoption arrangements and the costs of medicine, syringes, Bibles, clothing, food—as much as her 88-pound luggage limit will allow—that Mrs. Kaase plans to take to the orphanage.

To help, North Charleston United Methodist Church began a mission project involving a Christmas tree decorated with pledges of help from fellow church members.

Each ornament represented $25 in medicine and supplies, according to the Rev. Bill McNeill, pastor. He called the program "a splendid mission project."

A sense of urgency prevails because of fears that the borders will be closed. "One scandal and the doors will shut and the kids will be left there," said Mrs. Kaase.

That urgency has its own set of frustrations. Mrs. Kaase has arranged to take maternity leave and travel to Romania to find the child she and her husband hope to adopt. But the trip itself, originally planned for December, has been twice postponed and is now scheduled for February.

"We both feel God has called us to do this," said Mr. Kaase. "We are glad to heed the call."

"Whatever we do is for the Lord," said his wife. "We cannot save 65,000, but we can save one."

Mary Nichols is a free-lance writer living in Goose Creek, S.C. This article is adapted from the "South Carolina United Methodist Advocate."

New UM directory available

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE (UMNS)—The 1991 United Methodist Directory is now available from Cokesbury.

The 168-page book includes names and addresses of more than 2,000 United Methodist leaders and a new topical index of programs and resources. The subject index provides names and phone numbers of staff members related to particular programs or areas of interest.

New in this year's edition is a complete listing of all deans or presidents of United Methodist seminaries, colleges and universities, along with their addresses and phone numbers.

As in former editions, the $5.95 book includes a complete listing of bishops, agency boards and staff, study committees, caucuses, affiliated groups and ecumenical bodies.

To order, call toll free: 1 (800) 672-1789. The book is available for $4.50 in quantities of six or more.

Church economic justice expert supports employees' rights drive

United Methodist News Service

WASHINGTON—A campaign for a national "Bill of Rights for Employees" was launched Dec. 18 by the American Civil Liberties Union with endorsement by a United Methodist specialist in economic justice.

Fundamental U.S. values protected by the Constitution's Bill of Rights stop at the factory gate and office lobby, charged Lewis Maltby, an ACLU official, during a news conference introducing the legislative effort.

"People are more afraid of being punished by being fired unjustly than they are of being arrested and sent to jail," Mr. Maltby said.

The Rev. George E. Ogle, a program director of the General Board of Church and Society staff, said rights of workers have been supported in Methodism since the 1908 adoption of the first Social Principles statement by the former Methodist Episcopal Church, a predecessor of today's United Methodist Church.

"Religion is at the heart of social justice issues," Dr. Ogle said. "Racial minorities, women and even children are being abused in the work place."

The Church and Society executive said United Methodism long has called for safe work places and asserted that health, wages and safety are matters of mutual concern to both labor and management, and both parties must be involved in discussions of such issues.

The church's top policy-making body, the General Conference, reaffirmed in 1988 a resolution that "the church teaches that society should provide employment under safe and decent conditions so that the dignity of the workers can be elevated and their creativity exercised."

Ira Glasser, executive director of the ACLU, called the "lack of civil liberties in the American workplace" a "national scandal."

He said his organization's task force has as its mission "nothing less than changing our laws to extend basic civil liberties into the American workplace."

Mr. Maltby, citing the 200th anniversary of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, said that U.S. workers enjoy virtually none of the protection taken for granted in daily life.

"Getting legislation passed will take years, maybe decades," he added, "but it is going to happen."

Who's worth more? Pastor or plumber?

By GARY O'GUINN
Religious News Service

What's worth more, a baptism or a leaky faucet?

In a Gallup poll conducted earlier this year, 1,594 adults were asked what they felt were fair salaries for a sampling of occupations.

Alphabetically, clergy headed the menu of occupations under consideration, with plumbers falling next to last.

That's the last time clergy came first. Most people felt clergy should be paid the least of all professions, according to the Princeton Religion Research Center, which reported the poll in a recent newsletter.

Respondents said doctors and lawyers should make more money than clergy, on the average a lot more according to a lot of people. In the opinion of three out of four Americans, those who help us stay healthy and out of jail should make "$40,000 & over," the highest paid category mentioned in the survey.

But plumbers? One in four surveyed pegged $40,000 and up as an appropriate salary level for the woman or man in the pulpit, while a little more than one in three put plumbers there.

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VOLUME 137 NUMBER 33 | Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 | JANUARY 11, 1991

If I Had My Life to Live Over Again

I was in the ninth grade. Our Methodist Youth Fellowship hosted a sub-district Youth Rally in the local church to which my family belonged. We played "folk games" (Methodist youth didn't "dance" in those days), did some group singing, then went upstairs into the sanctuary for a time of worship and dedication.

The speaker was a pastor from Fayetteville, Arkansas, named D. L. Dykes. I had never heard of him, but I vividly remember his sermon. Though preached over 40 years ago, it still rings in my ears.

He spoke of sitting on a bus and overhearing part of a conversation involving two persons sitting directly in front of him. One said to the other, "if you had your life to live over again, what would you do differently?" Dr. Dykes said he leaned forward to hear the answer but the bus motor became louder at that point and he missed the response.

The preacher then went on to challenge the youth to live lives in such a way that we didn't spend a lot of time and energy thinking about what we would have done differently in the major choices of life.

That night seeds were planted in my life that grew into the call to ordained ministry. I have never regretted that decision.

But I recently learned that many persons do spend a lot of energy wishing they had done things differently. A 1990 Marriott Seniors' Attitude Survey of 1004 adults, age 65 and over, showed that:

51% would have saved more money
47% would have traveled more
31% would have chosen a different career
18% would have lived somewhere else
11% would have married someone else.

At least, they *said* that they would have made different decisions about these matters. I wonder.

The beginning of a new year is a good time to take stock of the future and not dwell on the past; to respond to the call of our highest selves and to CHOOSE LIFE rather than be victims of letting others decide for us.

The question is not what we would have done differently, but what God wants us to do differently.

William B. Oden

DISCIPLE

Start the New Year with DISCIPLE

Scholarships Still Available

An excellent way to kick off the new year as well as Vision 2000 in your church is to make DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY available to your members. The DISCIPLE seminar in Baton Rouge, February 14-16, will train pastors and lay teachers to lead this highly acclaimed study.

Two-hundred-dollar ($200) scholarships are still available for churches wishing to apply for this assistance. Do not hesitate to take advantage of this aid if you need to do so, regardless of the size of your church. All churches needing the assistance are strongly encouraged to apply. Scholarship requests are treated confidentially.

The Conference Council on Ministries determined after serious consideration and research that the Disciple program provides the kind of effective Bible study identified at last year's Listening Posts as a primary need in our churches. Therefore, together with the Board of Discipleship, and the United Methodist Foundation, they have arranged to have the DISCIPLE training available to our Louisiana churches at a cost considerably less than the regular $800 rate, hoping that as many churches as possible will participate.

The DISCIPLE program has been designed to increase members' sense of discipleship, and to help them develop leadership skills, as well as to further their knowledge and use of the Bible. The materials used by leaders and students are of exceptionally high quality. The Reverend Fred Wideman, chair of the Conference Planning Committee for the DISCIPLE training, is particularly impressed with the accompanying videotape presentations featuring professors from various United Methodist seminaries. "Few lay persons have had the opportunity to be exposed to such excellent scholarship."

The Embassy Suites in Baton Rouge will be the location for the February seminar. Arrangements for rooms cannot be made directly with the Embassy Suites, however. The DISCIPLE staff makes arrangements when participants register. Room and board expenses are included in the seminar cost. You will not be charged less than the total seminar cost if you choose to eat or stay elsewhere.

In the recent coordinated mailing, a "DISCIPLE Questions & Answers" page and a DISCIPLE brochure were enclosed. If you have further questions about the program, you may call the Reverend Karen Davis, 504-346-1646; Mr. Wideman, 504-752-2903; or the DISCIPLE representative in your district who is listed on the "Questions & Answers" sheet.

Scholarship requests may be addressed to the CCOM, in care of Ms. Karen Davis, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. To register for the DISCIPLE training seminar, you may complete the application below or call 1-800-672-1789. Cokesbury will bill participants after they have attended the February training seminar. Payment in advance is not required.

Scholarship requests CCOM; Registration to Cokesbury

REGISTRATION FORM

___ Yes! Register me for DISCIPLE training in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Name _____

Title or Position _____

Check One:

___ I am the first person from my church to enroll in a DISCIPLE training event.
___ I am an additional person from my church to enroll in a DISCIPLE training event.
___ I am representing my conference.

Church Name _____

Conference _____

Church Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Church telephone _____

Church membership size ___1-99 ___100-200 ___300 +

Accommodations Desired: ___ Single-Occupancy Room ___ Double-Occupancy Room

Please note any special handicapping conditions or dietary needs restrictions:

___ Check or money order payable to Cokesbury is enclosed
___ Charge to Cokesbury Church Acct. No. _____
___ Open a Cokesbury Account with this registration
___ I do not wish to register at this time. Please send more information.

Mail to: Cokesbury, Disciple Bible Study, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, Tn 37202

Volunteers in Mission Teams Needed

An urgent request for VIM teams to build single family homes in Panama during January, February and March of 1991, has just been received by Max Marble, South Central Jurisdiction Volunteers in Mission Coordinator. The homes will be for the many poor families whose homes were destroyed by the invasion of Panama last winter. The request has come from the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

Teams will work alongside the family members who will occupy the homes. They have been homeless for a whole year now and are very eager to see their homes become a reality. Most of the funding for the homes will be provided by the US Government; however, it will be necessary for each team to raise $2,000 for each home built. It is estimated that a 10-member team will be able to complete one of the 49-square-meter, concrete-block homes in a week's time. Two teams per week are being sought.

Housing, ground transportation and a project host will be provided by the Methodists of Panama. Teams will be lodged at the beautiful (Methodist) Panamerican University. Glenn Abernathy, a volunteer in mission from Tennessee, will serve as a technical supervisor. He will be in Panama for all three months to assist teams with technical help and advice. The University will also provide technical help when needed.

For more information and to get your team on the calendar, please contact the South Central Jurisdiction Office as soon as possible. (2144 Swallow Lane, Lewisville, TX 75067 (214) 317-3606.)

Centenary's President Donald A. Webb Sets June Retirement

Centenary College president Donald A. Webb will celebrate his 65th birthday and the completion of his 14th year as 33rd president of this small liberal arts college with retirement.

George D. Nelson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Centenary College announced December 13 that Dr. Webb will retire June 1, 1991.

Many members of the faculty and staff were shocked at the announcement made at a news conference at 2:30 p.m. in the South Dining Hall.

"Obviously, this is not one of the brightest moments," said Dr. Webb. "There is a time for everything . . . and this is the time for me to step down. It's time to let someone else take the baton."

Under Dr. Webb's tenure, Centenary College has flourished. The endowment grew from $4 million to $35 million; the operating budget, from $2 million to $12 million. Two buildings were constructed; three were renovated. Nine endowed chairs were added, including two which were part of the College's $21.5 million capital funds campaign, the Fulfill the Vision Campaign, which is also scheduled for completion on June 1.

Just recently, Centenary was nationally recognized as an outstanding value by **Money Guide Magazine** and for its academic excellence by **U.S. News & World Report**.

The Board registered its deep regret at the retirement, but expressed its love and gratitude for Dr. and Mrs. Webb and its appreciation for Dr. Webb's 14 years of service, which have been among the most exciting in Centenary's history.

"Of course we are very sad to hear of his decision," Mr. Nelson said. "He has done a magnificent job of bringing this campus together."

Dr. and Mrs. Webb will remain in Shreveport and have pledged to serve the College in any appropriate way. "I will help in any way I can," Dr. Webb said, and added with a smile, "but not in the capacity as president."

The announcement was made at this time in order to give adequate time for the search for a new president.

Seminar to Benefit Adult Youth Workers

April 19-20, 1991, the Council on Youth Serving Ministries and the Board of Discipleship are sponsoring an Adult Youth Workers Seminar at Maryhill Renewal Center in Pineville.

Participants will receive five (5) hours of instruction, making them eligible for .5 CEU credits. Cost for the event which will begin Friday, April 19 at 6:30 p.m., and concludes Saturday, April 20 at 3 p.m., is $40.

Workshop leaders and topics to be shared are:

* The Reverend Ted Standley, pastor of First UMC, Covington, "Ministry to Families with a Chemical Dependent Member";
* Mr. Bliss Spiller, Director of Youth Ministries at Broadmoor UMC, Baton Rouge, "Fund Raising";
* The Reverend Willis Dear, pastor of Centenary-Fisher UMC, Franklinton, "Organizing Trips";
* Ms. Pat Hogan, Diaconal Minister of Christian Education for First UMC, Natchitoches, "Literature/Resources."

Dr. Donald [illegible] Executive Director, Con[illegible] Ministries, will provide the spiritual guidance for the seminar.

All interested adult youth workers (full-time, part-time, summer director, or volunteer worker with youth) should send their registrations to Carolyn Dove, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Please make all checks payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference.

NAUMF Meets in New Orleans

The 1990 Annual Meeting of the National Association of United Methodist Foundations (NAUMF) was held in New Orleans November 28-December 2, 1990.

Representatives from over 60 Foundation staffs and related institutions gathered for the five-day annual meeting to hear speakers, attend workshops and to plan the business of the association.

Bishop William B. Oden of the Louisiana Area and the Reverend Joe W. McClain, New Orleans District Superintendent, spoke to the conference participants at devotional worship services held on Friday, November 30 and Saturday, December 1. Dr. Tom H. Matheny, president, Conference Board of Trustees, was the keynote speaker at the banquet on Saturday. The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana and its Executive Director, Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, hosted the event.

Dr. Tom H. Matheny; Bishop William B. Oden; Richard D. Bailey, president, NAUMF; and Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director, United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana, are shown at annual meeting held in New Orleans.

Ecumenical Sunday Materials Celebrate Diversity of Peoples of God

New materials for use on Ecumenical Sunday, which falls on January 20, 1991, celebrate ecumenical and interfaith agencies as "gathering places for all God's people."

The new materials complement the 1991 theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity during which Ecumenical Sunday occurs. The theme, "Hallelujah! Praise God All You Peoples!," opens the way to discuss many aspects of ecumenical and interfaith agencies, which work amid great racial, ethnic and religious diversity in this country," according to Sarah Vilankulu of the NCC's Communication Unit, which provides materials for the Ecumenical Sunday observance.

The National Council of Churches distributes a one-color church bulletin insert, which, in 1991, will feature a prayer for ecumenical and interfaith councils. It also helps congregations plan for the day by providing background on Ecumenical Sunday, suggestions for celebrating the day and a list of organizations whose interpretive materials would make good resources for an observance. For a free sample packet of these items, which became available September 30, 1990, contact the NCC Communication Unit, Room 850, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115; (212) 870-2227.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

Cliché about youth: Nonsense. . .

The lament is heard frequently and in a variety of forms:

"Young people just aren't interested in religion."

"We can't attract the kids."

"The youth just aren't 'there.' "

Repeat a cliché often enough and many people accept it as conventional wisdom.

Several recent events, however, suggest that this hit of conventional wisdom is nonsense. Vast numbers of young people today will respond positively when challenged hy authentic Christian witness! Consider:

■ Meeting in Louisville, Ky., 2,100 college youth from 12 mainline Protestant groups, including the United Methodist Church, attended the first large-scale gathering of its type in two decades for worship and Bible study (see related articles elsewhere in this issue).

■ In Urbana, Ill., more than 18,000 students attended a missionary conference sponsored annually by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, an independent interdenominational campus ministry.

These two events are noteworthy but not exceptions. We've noted and reported on several similarly well-attended Christian youth gatherings during the past year.

That more than 20,000 students spent part of their holidays in organized religious activity is evidence of a deep spiritual hunger that we dare not ignore or attempt to explain away.

. . . but spiritual 'lostness' is reality

As Christians, we are mandated to offer Christ to all who are "lost." Among today's youth, lostness probably takes the form primarily of groping for direction and meaning in life.

Because our society glamorizes youth, it is hard for many to think of young people as "lost." But consider the long list of dead ends they are tempted to try in search of meaning:

■ the despair of the drug culture;

■ the moral emptiness portrayed by most TV and film entertainment;

■ an unfulfilling preoccupation with acquiring material "things."

A major failure in many of our churches is that we've never seriously confronted our youth with the option of discovering God's purpose for their lives hy following Jesus Christ.

Congregations and individuals desiring to insure that future generations hear and respond to the call to Christian discipleship might begin with the following suggestions. They are gleaned from the successful recent youth events cited above.

✓ Initiate events for young people that are specifically faith-oriented, that is, which focus on spiritual concerns, including the meaning of life from the perspective of faith in Christ.

✓ Consider the setting. Effective outreach to young people frequently occurs somewhere besides, or in addition to, the church sanctuary, such as retreats, individual homes, and public facilities.

✓ Emphasize faith in action rather than denominational identity. Today's young people typically consider denominational differences irrelevant and are turned off by denominational exclusivity.

✓ Be willing to share your own witness as a Christian disciple. Youth are willing to receive compelling evidence that living "in Christ" enables one to make better sense of life's journey than any other alternative.

✓ Offer "big" challenges. Young people often are more willing to undertake bold ventures than their parents and grandparents. We should not spare them the opportunity of hearing and responding to the full implications of Jesus' life-transforming appeal: "Follow me."

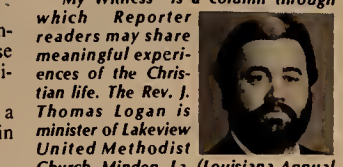
REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

Evidence is growing that today's young people, such as this participant at a recent youth meeting in Louisville, Ky., are more open than often is assumed to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

My Witness

Long-ago sports episode taught me how to forgive

By J. THOMAS LOGAN



"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. J. Thomas Logan is minister of Lakeview United Methodist Church, Minden, La. (Louisiana Annual Conference).

Mike and I started school together in the first grade. We were close friends and played on two championship teams together.

At times, I looked upon Mike as a brother. I know he thought of me in the same way.

Up until a few months ago, at a high school basketball team reunion I had organized, I had not seen Mike in at least 15 years. Later that evening, as we visited alone, he and I talked about an incident that happened during our senior year.

Our team was playing in a local tournament. We were working on another solid, winning season. During the middle of a Saturday afternoon game, the oddest thing took place.

I was resting on the bench and sitting next to Mike. Mike was our sixth man and usually the first substitute to go into the game. So far, though, Mike had not played in this game.

Suddenly, while the game was still being played, Mike rose to his feet and walked away. He met his parents at the gym door and left. He did not return to the final game that night. Although we won the tournament, it was an empty victory.

I have often wondered what really happened that afternoon. I was totally confused. But I was bothered by something that went much deeper—I did not know what to do, or say, or how to respond to my best friend.

As the team dressed for the Monday afternoon practice, every member of the team reflected a strange silence. As we entered the gym, our coach was standing on the far side of the court.

Mike was there with him sitting quietly on the bottom bleacher. We went over to them and our coach asked us to take a seat. We did without saying a word.

He explained to us that Mike had something to say. Mike stood, faced us, and said, "I am sorry for walking off the team. If you will let me, I would like to come back to the team."

There was a silence for a few moments and, then someone said, "Let's start practice!" The matter came to an end. Nothing more was ever said again.

After all these many years, I think I have finally come to understand what happened that day. Of course, Mike showed much courage and strength in facing the team and asking permission to return.

But, there was more that took place. Mike asked the team for forgiveness. And forgiveness was given. The entire episode then was forgotten.

Too often, when someone we know has made a mistake we are very quick to judge and pass sentence. In doing so, we experience a case of human self-righteousness. At the same time, we fail to remember those times in which we have been guilty of falling.

This is why forgiveness becomes even more important. We have all needed it at some point in our lives.

But as we forgive or are forgiven, the next step is to forget. Otherwise, we have not truly forgiven . . . or grown in our effort to be more Christ-like.

Letters to the Editor

Soldier's 'objector' bid draws sharp criticism

I take great exception to the Dec. 14 article about Sgt. George Morse headlined, "Jailed soldier says faith backs his disobedience."

Far from being supportive of his position, church leaders such as Bishop Judith Craig and the Rev. Dennis Paulson should condemn his personal dishonesty of refusing to carry out a function for whicb be has been supported and trained, and for which he took a voluntary oath.

He bas accepted pay, position and promotion, and should be honorable in carrying out such expectations. Christ's teachings concerned themselves with *personal* integrity.

I know of no passage in the Bible that condemned war. As a lifelong Methodist, I feel our reduced influence in the world—including reduction in members in spite of increasing population—is probably primarily due to our decreased emphasis on individual and personal morality and integrity by our bishops and ministers.

George S. Lovejoy
Memphis, Tennessee

No sympathy deserved

A Dec. 14 article reported that Sgt. George Morse is refusing to participate in any act contributing to war.

Where was Mr. Morse's conscientious objection during his previous seven years of service? He was a volunteer in the Army and accepted pay from the taxpayers to carry out his oath of enlistment.

I resent having helped pay him for seven years and now he refuses to serve when asked to carry out the job for which he has been paid. He should return all pay and allowances with interest or be court-martialed. He does not deserve sympathy from United Methodists.

William R. Coons Jr.
Groves, Texas

Opportunity missed

Regarding Stephen Swecker's Dec. 7 "Faithfully yours" concerning his Army reservist friend, Doug Cannon, being mobilized for Operation Desert Shield:

While struggling with his "ache and anger" at seeing his friend depart, Mr. Swecker missed a great opportunity to say a word of gratitude for Doug Cannon and people like him who commit themselves to answer when their country calls to oppose the Saddam Husseins of the world.

Edwin S. Davis
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

How far we've drifted

The Nov. 30 article headlined, "It's our moral presence that offends Saudis" by Roy Delamotte helpfully informed United Methodists about the moral standards of Muslims.

However, I do think that the headline contained misinformation. It would have been much more accurate to say that it's our "immoral" or even "amoral" presence that offends the Saudis.

Mr. Delamotte enumerated five Muslim standards that he states are "culture shock that has floored our troops even after long briefings." Maybe this is a revelation to American Christians of how far our society had drifted from the Christian beliefs in which most of us were trained.

It seems to me that these Muslim standards that our troops find so shocking are much more Christian than the pagan society of promiscuous sex, pornography, broken homes, abused children, dope and drunkenness that we Americans now accept as normal. Such conduct is not normal and it is destroying our way of life.

Vickrey Dougherty
Claremont, California

Welcome to our newest Reporter readers at Bear Creek UMC and Austin Avenue UMC

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 1,700 member-families of **Bear Creek United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas** (Texas Annual Conference) and 900 member-families of **Austin Avenue United Methodist Church in Waco, Texas** (Central Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide tbat publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Houston and Waco, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Faithfully yours

'Prayer card' helps me discover new brother

Few people are aware of it, not even my own family, but since last August I've had a new brother.

Stephen Swecker

A brother in Christ, that is.

Actually, I've not been secretive about our relationship. It's just that I have not met this person myself.

What I know is tbis: Khatchig Dadeyan is a Christian for whom I've been asked to pray by organizers of the World Council of Churches Assembly Feb. 7-20 in Australia.

His name is posted above my desk on a small card that I received in August at a briefing for U.S. Christians scheduled to go to Australia. The 200 others there also received "prayer cards" for Christians worldwide who, like Mr. Dadeyan, will be at the Australia meeting.

My card tells me that Mr. Dadeyan is a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church. He lives in Cyprus, an island country smaller than Connecticut off the coast of Turkey.

Each day that I'm at my desk—and most that I'm not—I think about and offer a brief prayer for Mr. Dadeyan. I pray for his well-being and thank God for his Christian witness in a place in which Christianity is a small minority.

At first it was a peculiar feeling, praying for someone who was no more to me than a typewritten name on a piece of paper. I confess: For several weeks after receiving his name it was hard to dredge up any feelings for Mr. Dadeyan.

It seemed futile to try to imagine what kind of person he is, what his particular circumstances are, or how my prayers might benefit him. To top it off, Mr. Dadeyan doesn't know that I'm praying for him.

For that matter, he has no idea of who I am, what my circumstances are, or—and this realization hit me hardest of all—that I even exist!

Nevertheless, the reality that we're brothers—two people with a common loyalty to Jesus Christ who happen to live on opposite sides of the globe—somehow has penetrated my spirit during these four months of prayer.

I can't pinpoint the transformation. It was not a sudden experience or insight. Rather, I have awakened gradually to a bond that I've come to value and believe is valued by God.

Perhaps it isn't enough that we pray only for people and things that we know and care about, although we should, at a minimum, do that.

The reality that prayer "works" may be experienced most dramatically when our supplications regularly embrace people and circumstances unknown to us.

We may never know what such prayers do for others. But they surely will do something positive to and for us—a witness I plan to share with my brother Khatchig Dadeyan if we meet, as I hope we will, a few weeks from now in Australia.

—*STEPHEN L. SWECKER*

Mr. Swecker is Faith Forum page editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him?" (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Matthew 4:19)

Readings for week of Jan. 14

Monday: Psalms 29
Tuesday: Psalms 30
Wednesday: Genesis 1:1-19
Thursday: Genesis 1:20-31
Friday: Mark 1:4-11
Saturday: Acts 19:1-7
Sunday: Acts 19:11-20

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Faith watch

18,000 STUDENTS GATHER: A number of new features surfaced at the latest missionary conference of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, which attracted a record of more than 18,000 students from both Christian and secular colleges and universities (see related editorial on Page 2). For the first time, missionary agencies from Two-thirds World (non-Western) nations displayed exhibits and tried to recruit North Americans of all ethnicities to serve with their organizations. In addition, some North American agencies exhibiting at the Dec. 27-31 conference at the University of Illinois at Urbana represented specific ethnic communities, such as African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Korean-Americans and Native Americans.

RECONCILIATION: Ten American college students and two professors, including a United Methodist clergyman, will make up a five-day Fellowship of Reconciliation "peace delegation" starting Jan. 9 in Baghdad. The group hopes to meet with Iraqi students and to deliver medicine to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and to the Jordanian Red Crescent Society for evacuees who have fled Kuwait and Iraq. (Red Crescent is the Muslim counterpart to the Red Cross). The Rev. Ken Bedell of United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, said the primary purpose of the trip "is to make a clear statement that it is not too late for a negotiated settlement to the Gulf crisis." The Fellowship of Reconciliation, headquartered in Nyack, N.Y., was founded 75 years ago and advocates nonviolent solutions to international problems.

MORE MISSIONARIES: Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees recently appointed 35 new missionaries and reappointed eight former missionaries.That brings the number appointed during 1990 to 414, the highest since 1985's record of 429. Last year's total, a 25 percent jump over 1989, includes 236 new career and associate missionaries and 178 international Service Corps workers who serve limited terms.

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE PHOTO BY JAMES TOOO

Middle East a concern

PHILADELPHIA—Children hold candles at an interfaith vigil for peace in the Middle East held recently at Philadelphia City Hall. The group of about 100 citizens also participated in an interfaith worship at Arch Street United Methodist Church that included remarks by Bishop Susan M. Morrison (Philadelphia Area).

Compiled from news and staff reports

Rhode Island bank crisis hits United Methodists

Southern New England congregations and conference affected by credit union closings

By ANN G. WHITING

United Methodists and tbeir local congregations are being hit by the closing of privately insured credit unions in Rhode Island.

Fallout from the closings could also affect budget receipts for the Southern New England Annual Conference for the end of fiscal 1990.

By Jan. 4, the conference treasurer's office had one cburch's apportionment check "bounce" because it was drawn on a closed credit union.

Congregation affected

The North Kingstown, R.I., United Metbodist Church—ironically paying 100 percent of its apportionments for the first time in recent history—has all its money in the Davisville Credit Union.

Davisville is on a list of 11 unlikely to get federal insurance because their financial positions are so weak, according to the Jan. 4 issue of the "Providence Journal."

Sandra Kelley, Southern New England conference treasurer, told the Reporter that the North Kingstown church could not even make payroll until it received its Jan. 6 offering.

She expressed concern for congregations whose funds are tied up and individual United Methodists whose financial future is in question because of the crisis.

Full impact uncertain

Ms. Kelley also said it was impossible to know yet the full impact of the financial crisis, but she predicted a possible domino effect among individuals, churches and annual conference programs.

She also said that even if the State of Rhode Island agrees to bail out the insolvent credit unions, it could be months before depositors receive any portion of their funds.

An informal survey of Rhode Island pastors showed at least one other church—Grace United Methodist Church in Westerly, R.I.—with funds in an affected credit union. That credit union had apparently qualified for federal insurance and was due to reopen on Jan. 7.

'Everything's tied up'

The Rev. Margaret Long, Grace UMC's pastor, said last week that "everything's tied up, but it is not creating a problem as long as the credit union re-opens on schedule. There is no real sense of panic, although it is a problem for some members who have their own accounts in closed institutions."

Another casualty of the credit union crisis could be additional capital improvements at the Southern New England conference camp.

Camp Aldersgate, in North Scituate, R.I., has nearly $80,000 in certificates of deposit in the Rhode Island Central Credit Union, which was still closed at press time.

Director Jeffrey Thomas said the money is from a capital funds drive and a separate building fund, so current cash flow and operations are not affected by the closing.

Not likely to qualify

However, the Rhode Island Central Credit Union is also on the list of 11 credit unions likely not to qualify for federal insurance.

While it is the second largest credit union in the state, it is reported by the "Providence Journal" to be "extremely weak," with much of its assets tied up in real estate loans.

Aldersgate's site committee approves sites of deposit, as do local church finance committees and administrative boards or councils, Ms. Kelley said.

"Average people would have no reason to question the 'Insured by RISDIC' logo on their credit union," she said. "They would assume 'insured' meant 'safe.'"

Ms. Kelley said conference policy is to invest only in federally insured institutions.

Meanwhile, the Southern New England Methodist Federal Credit Union is federally insured and apparently protected from a crisis like that in Rhode Island, said its manager, Donna Fowlie.

Ms. Whiting is editor of the Southern New England Conference edition of the Reporter.

Christian collegians challenged to change world

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

See related editorial and photo on Page 2.

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The challenge was clear. They were to change the world, but change it based on a strong scriptural foundation.

This challenge was given to 2,100 Christian college students, including some 35 international students, who gathered over New Year's weekend in Louisville.

It was the first time in more than 20 years that Christian college students from 11 mainline Protestant denominations had met together.

Many Gifts, One Spirit

Under the theme of "Celebrate '90. Many Gifts; One Spirit," they gathered for worship, Bible study, workshops and fun under auspices of the New York-based Council for Ecumenical Student Christian Ministry, formed in 1987.

Following a communion service celebrated by participants of all the denominations, the Rev. Donald G. Shockley, author of "Campus Ministry: The Church Beyond Itself," said the warm atmosphere of the service reminded him of the gospel song, "There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place."

"People need to know," Mr. Shockley told the Reporter, "that this sweet spirit was in a gathering of diversity of every sort and with a passion for social justice.

"If you can mix spirituality and real concern for this world, you really have something extraordinary," Mr. Shockley continued.

In this he found strong agreement from Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly, who, her 70-plus years notwithstanding, was a big preaching hit with the students.

"There is no dichotomy between the spiritual expression and social action," the retired United Methodist bishop, the first black woman bishop of a denomination in the United States, said in a sermon to the assembled youth.

"The wholeness of the Gospel holds that together," she said. "Jesus showed this. He was interested that people had food."

Continuing, Bishop Kelly discussed the passage from 1 Corinthians about spiritual gifts.

"Gifts are given to us for the common good," she said. "Many people in what is called the charismatic experience get caught up in the ecstasy of it but don't link it to the purpose of God. That doesn't go far enough."

Urging the students to use their gifts for God's purpose, she said, "This is no video show that we are watching that we can turn on and off, but this is the life that God gave us.

"It was given to us by a God who can use even me—never ready, never right, never on time. Yet God can bridge the gap between what we are and what we can be to make the world a better place."

'Follow One who calls'

Another favorite with the students was the Rev. Patricia Brown, mission evangelism executive for the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

Ms. Brown spoke at a meeting of students from tbree Methodist denominations—United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. (With more than 700 participants, Methodists were the largest contingent at the gathering).

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—College students' faces and clapping hands reflect the enthusiasm and vitality of "Celebrate '90," an ecumenical gathering of college-age youth held over New Year's.

Following her speecb on traditional Wesleyan theology illustrated through stories of personal pain and spiritual growth, she invited students to come forward in response to "the One who answers before we ask ... who comes before we call."

Students poured down the aisle to the hymn that seems to have become a national theme song of dedication, "Here I Am, Lord." More than 100 came until, arms entwined, they wrapped around the large meeting room.

They were still coming when the music ended. Suddenly Bishop Kelly's voice sang out, "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound." Immediately the congregation of young people began applauding and joined in singing as the bishop called out the words.

Although the ecumenical youth gathering was not convened for the purpose of making political statements, the specter of international tension in the Middle East was a serious concern of many—students and adult leaders alike.

Some found ways to express their concern through a prayer vigil and a silent walk for peace on New Year's Eve (see related article).

Co-sponsors and participating denominations of the five-day event were American Baptist Churches USA, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, Episcopal Student Planning Committee, Evangelical Lutheran Cburch and Lutheran Student Movement.

Other sponsoring groups were Moravian Churcb in America, National Student YWCA, Presbyterian Church (USA), Presbyterian Student Strategy Team, Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ and three Methodist denominations—United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion.

Students' peace vigil shows concern for Persian Gulf situation

Reporter Staff Special

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Even during the warm year-end celebrations of 2,100 Christian college students gathered in Louisville, many students could not ignore the cold realities of possible military conflict in the Middle East.

Some students and their adult leaders organized a prayer vigil and a silent march for peace to demonstrate their concern for the lives of individuals "on both sides of the sand."

The students (with help from some adult leaders) organized the vigil and march as individuals rather than as representatives of the national ecumenical gathering they were attending.

Officials of the gathering bad made it clear to the students tbat the meeting was not called for political purposes.

The prayer vigil was held during a noontime fast. Among some 65 people sitting on the hotel carpet were at least 15 adult leaders of the youth.

The candlelight peace marcb began at 10 p.m. on a frigid New Year's Eve. In silence, students (variously estimated between 400 and 800) walked several blocks from the convention center to Theatre Square, site of a public New Year's celebration.

"We are student Christians acting out of our faith," Heidi Thompson, a senior at Ohio State University and a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), told news reporters.

The students circulated petitions that urged patience and a diplomatic solution in the Middle East. Identical petitions earlier had garnered 800 signatures among participants at the ecumenical gathering.

The students' actions grew out of public meetings on the Middle East with Moorehead Kennedy, a workshop leader at the gathering better known for having spent 444 days as a hostage in Iran in the 1980s.

In Dr. Kennedy's Hostage Crisis Simulation workshop, some 35 students and adults role-played the difficulties of negotiating a crisis in the Middle East.

"Christian churches have always taken a very strong view on international issues," Dr. Kennedy said. "The simulation workshops are a bridge between Christian ethics and international affairs."

A former U.S. foreign service officer in the Middle East, he is the author of "Ayatollah in the Cathedral" and co-author of "Terrorism: The New Warfare."

That the demonstrations grew out of Dr. Kennedy's meeting was ironic because those actions were the opposite of Dr. Kennedy's counseling.

Although Dr. Kennedy professed to be opposed to a military solution in the Middle East, "demonstration techniques" are of little value in a highly complex issue like the present situation in Kuwait, he told the 250 students and adult leaders.

"The trouble with an approach that relies on demonstrations is that it depends on a clearly black and white issue," he said.

The present situation deals with an oil dependency in the West complicated by an act of aggression in the Persian Gulf and other complications, he continued.

A better approach, he said, is to form political action groups willing to work with the government for a political end.

"What we are after here is a sensible long range policy toward the Middle East and the Third World," Dr. Kennedy said.

While encouraging the students to speak out for what they believe, Dr. Kennedy urged them to listen to the opinions of others as well.

It was important, Dr. Kennedy said, to educate themselves about the Middle East through every resource available at their universities so that they could speak knowledgeably.

Nevertheless, students wanted to know what could be done immediately.

Dr. Kennedy suggested they write to their congressional representatives and to the secretary of state. He also counseled them not to lose sight of the goal of long range foreign policy changes.

"I think it would be a great shame," he said, "if we directed all our energies to sparing ourselves the horrors of war. The people of the Middle East are already undergoing those horrors."

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Blindfolded "hostages" clutch one another's shoulders for guidance as they are led into a workshop on the Middle East led by former Iran hostage Moorehead Kennedy.

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DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES. Full-time position to coordinate and expand youth program in 1300-member church. College graduate with vital Christian faith preferred. Salary negotiable. Deadline, February 1, 1991. Send resume to: Associate Minister, First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 452, Dyersburg, TN 38025-0452.

Faith connections

COMMISSIONED: Ten new United Methodist missionaries were commissioned recently by the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. The latest commissioning brought the church's total missionary force in the U.S. and overseas to 1,001. Commissioned were: Rebeccah Sue Bartow to Sendai, Japan; Marla Jane Fosmire to La Paz, Bolivia; Liza Rowena Go and Kevin Masaichi Uchida to Toyko, Japan; Patricia Lee Hefner to Motoko, Zimbabwe; Donald David Reasoner to Managua, Nicaragua; Julie Marie Todd to Hiroshima, Japan; Jeremiah Harold Wagner and Patricia Harkness Wagner to Kingston, Jamaica; and Frances Jobnson Willert to Taejon, Korea. A new group of missionary candidates began classes at the church's Mission Resource Center in Atlanta in early January.

CAMPUS MINISTRY HEAD: The Rev. Donald G. Shockley, author of "Campus Ministry: The Church Beyond Itself," has been named assistant general secretary of campus ministry for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Dr. Shockley, who served 11 years as chaplain at United Methodist-related Emory University in Atlanta, will assume the post March 1. He succeeds the Rev. Allan J. Burry, who died Aug. 28.

RETIREE RETURNS: The retired head of research for the General Board of Discipleship returns this month as a part-time consultant and coordinator of Discipleship's Ethnic Church Resource Training program. The Rev. Warren J. Hartman, who retired in 1988, will oversee resources, training and networking for racial and ethnic leaders. The program offers intense, one-day training programs designed to meet the specified needs of the participants.

SPIRITUAL ACADEMIES: Eleven sessions of the "Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation" will be sponsored this year by The Upper Room, a division of the General Board of Discipleship. The academy offers two introductory courses in spiritual formation. Sessions are planned in Nebraska, Northern and Central Illinois, Pacific Northwest, West Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Alabam-West Florida annual conferences and the Dakotas episcopal area. For more information write the Rev. Danny Morris, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0189.

Compiled from news and staff reports

'I'm where I need to be to serve God's people'

Navy chaplain says Middle East situation is placing bigger strains on military families

From Navy Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va.—Driving through Navy housing in Norfolk, it's easy to overlook the small trailer parked amidst 596 homes sprawled over 90 acres.

As a United Methodist minister and U.S. Navy chaplain, the Rev. Roger L. Crim is the on-site pastor. He shares the job with another chaplain, a Catholic priest, for a disparate flock. The trailer is their office.

With the current situation in the Middle East, the trailer becomes something of a nerve center, particularly for young Navy families, Lt. Crim said. Normal problems of separation—ships at sea, families left at home—appear to be magnified, he added.

"We have a lot of hope and denial in our families where Operation Desert Shield is concerned," he said. "The operation has put additional stresses on families because the ships' deployment schedules have been changing so rapidly. It's hard for a family, not knowing when or for how long Mom or Dad will be gone.

"Our families are still hoping that this thing will be settled quickly. But when reality hits, all of the chaplains expect to see more depression counseling. We'll also have to re-enter the grief process if the ships are extended at sea. Many emotional issues will have to be dealt with over the next months."

3,300 residents helped

Just as any minister, Lt. Crim faces daily challenges, some of them unique to military life.

"I think about 3,300 people live in this housing complex, and about 2,200 of them are children," said Lt. Crim.

"We use the trailer for our administration work and as offices, hold Sunday School in two housing units and use the community center on Sundays for Mass at 8 a.m. and Protestant worship at 9:30," he explained.

"I think the biggest difference is that civilian churches and their people have roots," he said. "Because the military is so mobile it's difficult for people to feel that the church is theirs. The social type of programs that chaplains become involved in seem to be even more effective in the military community than the more traditional Sunday school and church services."

'They'll invest so much'

"Military people will invest only so much of themselves," he lamented. "In many ways, it's almost like trying to start a church in a housing project."

Nonetheless, the 40-year-old clergyman is not daunted. He said he felt that God was leading him into a different area of the ministry when he joined the Navy's Chaplain Corps in 1983 and he still feels that way.

"I'm where I need to be to serve God's people," he said. "I wear two insignia on my collar. The first is the cross, because first and foremost I'm in the Navy because of God. The second is my lieutenant's bars which can help, sometimes. Though I don't like to, I can use my authority as an officer to force a person to do what they are supposed to do—that is, if all else fails."

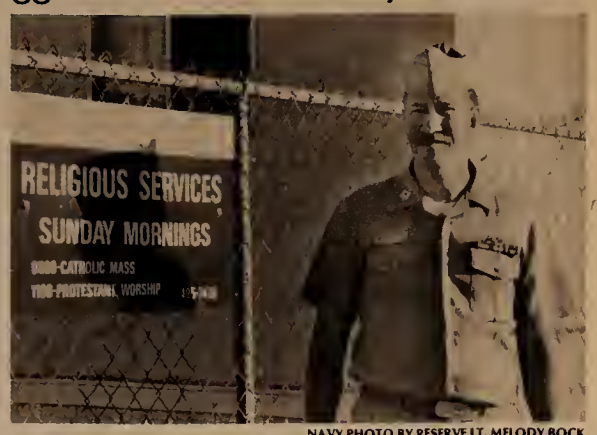
The "all else" is where Lt. Crim concentrates most of his attention.

Lots of counseling

"I do a lot of counseling," he said. "Maybe 70-80 sessions a month. Many of our families are junior military people with small incomes and larger families. I see lots of financial problems, people trying to work with the problems of blended families. Because we have a large teen-age population, we have many teen-age problems, too."

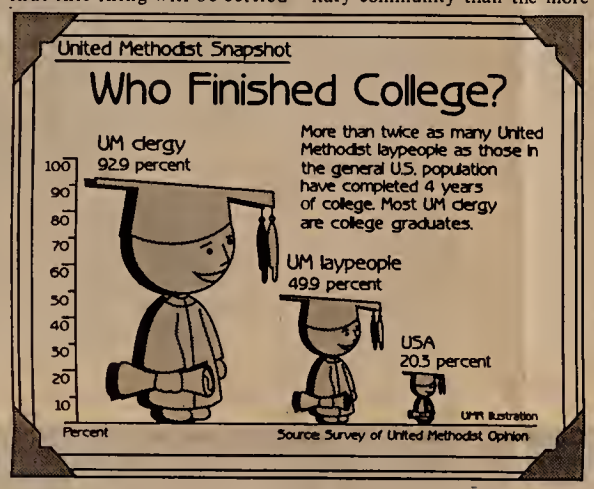
Although Lt. Crim plans to start "rap" sessions for the community's teen-agers this month, he knows that all the talking in the world can only make the biggest military family problem—separation—more bearable, not acceptable.

"Even when Navy people aren't at sea," Lt. Crim said, "they tend to put in more hours at work than civilians do for comparable pay. They are on call 24 hours a day and this can put additional stress on families."



NAVY PHOTO BY RESERVE LT. MELODY BOCK

NORFOLK, Va.—Lt. Roger L. Crim, Navy chaplain, stands near a sign that posts the regular worship services held at a community center in a housing development for naval families. Chaplain Crim says that he is increasing his counseling duties because of the emotional demands placed on families by their loved ones' duty in Operation Desert Shield in the Middle East.



Pan-Methodists offer mission guide

United Methodist News Service

WASHINGTON—Would you like to know more about the works of those in other Methodist denominations? Then check out the new "Pan-Methodist Social Witness Resource Book."

The guide lists and describes 140 model ministries operated by the Pan-Methodist Cooperation Commission's four participating Methodist denominations—United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal (AME), African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME).

The list, which "highlights projects of churches that responded to a call to be listed," represents "corporate involvement of Christians in the concerns of the immediate communities" said the Rev. Luther E. Smith Jr. of Atlanta. Dr. Smith is a coordinator of the project and a member of the Pan-Methodist social witness committee.

Programs and projects featured in the guide include:

✓ Summer-job assistance for economically disadvantaged youth;

✓ Development of a church-sponsored, multimillion-dollar housing complex for older adults and persons with handicapping conditions; and

✓ English tutoring for Haitians.

While Dr. Smith said the number of churches involved in AIDS ministries is impressive, the book "lacks ministries related to the farm crisis, refugees and Native Americans. . ."

Ten thousand copies will be available in March for $2.

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Sudan civil war, floods, drought increase likelihood of famine

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

MACHI CAMP, Sudan—Young mothers hold emaciated children at a Sudan refugee camp as they wait for international Christian Relief from such parachurch groups as World Vision. Recent news reports say an approaching food crisis is likely to be as bad as Sudan's famine of 1984. United Methodists can assist this effort through gifts to the Advance.

An appeal to assist victims of an eight-year civil war in Sudan has been made by the relief arm of the National Council of Churches.

Church World Service and Witness has made a $1 million emergency appeal to its member churches for the Sudan Council of Churches. United Methodists can make gifts to a special Advance fund through the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

The ongoing civil war in the North African country of Sudan has created widespread food shortages and a deteriorating economy. Hundreds of thousands of people have also died because of famine.

Flooding, and now predictions of severe drought, continue to drain the resources of the Sudan Council of Churches as they strive to meet the needs of the people, said Lloyd Rollins of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Sudan is Africa's largest country in area—one-fourth the size of the United States. News reports say this is the third time since 1984 that the country faces such a catastrophe. Food shipments historically have been used as a weapon against innocent victims by rebel and government forces (see UMR May 5, 1989).

The U.S. Aid for International Development Famine Early Warning System reported in October that emergency food needs for 1991 may total more than 1 million metric tons of grain. That's because an extended heat wave and drought in eastern Sudan last year caused a crop failure.

Although the Sudanese government continues to assert that there is no crisis in the Sudan, local authorities are predicting serious shortages beginning this month.

According to a Nov. 23 World Council of Churches report, Sudan now officially counts 3.6 million displaced persons (most from the south into the greater Khartoum area), an estimated 500,000 in towns in the south, and 9.5 million over the borders in southwest Ethiopia, Uganda, North Zaire, and Chad.

Mr. Rollins told the Reporter that gifts to the Advance will be used to feed at least 340,000 of these displaced Sudanese. The money will also be used to purchase medicines, shelter, clothing, blankets, cooking utensils, seeds and tools.

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Sudan Emergency Advance No. 184385-0

Love to 'tell the story?' Here's help

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—If you "love to tell the story," there's a new resource to help you.

Abingdon Press is developing a series of companions to the books of the Bible to help in telling the stories the books contain. Abingdon Press is the book-publishing arm of The United Methodist Publishing House.

Beginning with the beginning, the first volume in "The Storyteller's Companion to the Bible" series covers 30 stories from the Book of Genesis. The 208-page hardcover book is scheduled for release in May 1991.

Series editor is the Rev. Michael E. Williams, a staff member at Belle Meade United Methodist Church in Nashville. Mr. Williams for several years was director of preaching ministries at the General Board of Discipleship.

Background information is provided by the Rev. John C. Holbert, who teaches Old Testament and preaching at United Methodist-related Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

Volume 2, focusing on the books Exodus-Joshua, is scheduled for release in January 1992. A total of six volumes is planned.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
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Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Reminder

Sunday, January 20, 1991
Human Relations Day
Ecumenical Sunday

Monday, January 21, 1991
Martin Luther King Jr.
Birthday Observance

Both/And — Not Either/Or

I recently cleaned out my files and came across a lecture that was given by a very astute bishop to new district superintendents several years ago.

The bishop said that there are "being" churches — congregations that emphasize the power and beauty of worship, the importance of prayer, the fellowship of the Saints, and just being together as members. He then contrasted the "being" churches with "doing" churches — congregations that do a lot of planning, programming, and goal-setting; that thrive on tasks and projects. The bishops went on to say that problems often develop when a "being" pastor is appointed to a "doing" church and vice versa.

I wonder. Am I a "being" or a "doing" pastor? As a bishop, should I lead the Cabinet into deeper sensitivity about these issues as we consider appointments?

There is constant tension between being and doing. Jesus said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest," but he also said, "Go, . . . make disciples."

What if our lecturer is partly right and partly wrong? What if we are called to both being and doing? What if prayer without programming leads to an inverted selfish religion and programming without prayer leads to shallow do-goodism? What if our worship and our witnessing cannot really be separated in a wholistic faith?

Thank God for being and doing. Both are in the nature of Jesus Christ whose person and work were unified into one nature.

William B. Oden

January 31-February 1

Convocation of Boards to Meet in Baton Rouge

The annual meeting of the Convocation of Boards for the Louisiana Conference is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, January 31-February 1. The Conference Council on Ministries will meet Friday afternoon, February 1, at 3 p.m. All meetings will be held in the facilities of First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge. Clergy and laity alike will gather from all parts of the state to participate in the work of the various boards, agencies, commissions and committees of the Louisiana Conference.

The Convocation of Boards provides a time each year for the various boards and agencies of the Conference to evaluate the past year's programs and ministries, and to finalize plans for the current year. Time is also spent looking at long-range hopes and visions for the ministry of the United Methodist Church in Louisiana and beyond.

The Convocation of Boards will officially begin on Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m. with a dinner in the fellowship hall of First Church. Following the meal, the program will focus on two issues of importance to our United Methodist Church: The Bishops' Initiative, **Vital Congregations — Faithful Disciples**, and our own Conference's Initiative, **VISION 2000**. Leadership for the evening will be provided by Bishop Robert Morgan of the Jackson Area (Mississippi), and Louisiana Bishop William B. Oden. The evening will conclude with members of the Conference Boards and Agencies participating in a covenant renewal service.

During the meetings, all boards will be considering programs and activities relative to their particular interests and responsibilities. Such concerns as evangelism, Christian education, mission at home and abroad, world peace, needs and concerns of the ethnic-minority local church, higher education and campus ministries, the financial status of the Conference and its plans for 1991, and other programs of interest to clergy and laity that will affect the future of Louisiana Methodism, will be discussed.

The Conference Council on Ministries, under the direction of chairperson, Dr. Charles Simmons, will close the activities of the 1991 Convocation with a meeting on Friday afternoon at 3 p.m.

The various boards, commissions, and committees of the Conference will begin their meetings at 9 a.m. on Friday, February 1. (The exact time for boards to begin may vary and notices will come from their respective chairpersons if the starting time is other than 9 a.m.)

All members of the Conference boards, committees, agencies, and commissions are urged to attend, as well as all persons interested in knowing more about the committees and activities of Louisiana Methodism. This event is always a highlight in the life of a Conference, as laity and clergy together have an opportunity to make plans and preparations for the work of the church in the days ahead.

CONVOCATION OF BOARDS AGENDA
JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1, 1991

Thursday, January 31
10:00 a.m. Ordained Ministry, First Church Parlor
12:00 noon Conference COM Executive Com., Headquarters Building
3:00 p.m. CrossLines Ministry, Room 115
3:30 p.m. Health & Welfare, Wesley Room
4:00 p.m. Disaster Preparedness & Relief, Room 117
4:00 p.m. Communications Committee, Room 106
6:30 p.m. Convocation Dinner, Gym

Friday, February 1
7:00 a.m. Conference Board of Trustees, Embassy Suites
8:00 a.m. Conference Board of Laity, Shoney's Restaurant, 3151 College Drive
9:00 a.m. Board of Diaconal Ministry, Room 113
Board of Ordained Ministry, First Church Parlor
Board of Discipleship, Lyle Hall
Church & Society, Room 107
Global Ministries, Craft Room
Board of Pensions, Room 112
Board of Higher Education, Room 114
Equitable Salaries, Room 105
Archives & History, Room 108
Religion & Race, Room 106
Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns, Room 117
Special Ministries, Room 116
Town & Country Ministries, Room 115
10:00 a.m. C.F.A., Headquarters Building
12:00 noon Episcopal Committee, Episcopal Residence
12:00 noon UMW Administrative Committee, Room 115
12:00 noon The Methodist Federation for Social Action, Room 116
3:00 p.m. Council on Ministries, Craft Room

Peace With Justice Tour Coming to Louisiana

Even as Louisiana United Methodists anxiously await the latest news of the Persian Gulf crisis, we pray for peace in our troubled world. It is an auspicious time to welcome two disciples of peace on a national mission tour sponsored by the General Boards of Church and Society, Discipleship, and Global Ministries. The Reverend Carol Windrum, Director of Nebraska Peace with Justice Ministries, and her husband, Tim Fickenscher, will be in Louisiana February 5 through 11. Their year-long mission tour began July 1, 1990, with talks throughout the New England area at conferences and local churches, followed by appearances in an additional 28 states.

The couple uses innovative and sensitive approaches in helping others to consider peace with justice issues. Mrs. Windrum is described by Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn as being an able communicator. He writes: "Through her knowledge of the issues involved and her open style of relationships with people and a style of presentation that seeks to help rather than to threaten, she has won acceptance and gained support for her cause. She has outstanding gifts and talents and a spirit of dedication and commitment that is an inspiration to experience." Tim Fickenscher over the years has served in various leadership capacities with the Nebraskans for Peace. He enjoys teaching, especially in his field of Special Education, and is known to relate well to people of all ages.

The Louisiana Conference Board of Church and Society is sponsoring this week-long journey through Louisiana. The time is too short for the couple to reach all communities. United Methodist pastors and laity are urged to participate in the events in their regions. The General Boards comment that "the team will speak prophetically but also will be sensitive and respectful of different viewpoints and opinions."

The journey of Carol and Tim will include the following events:

New Orleans — February 5; 10 a.m. — First United Methodist Church; "Pastor — Prophet and Priest."

Lafayette — February 6, 7 p.m. — First United Methodist Church; "Environmental Stewardship."

Lake Charles — February 7, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. — Warren United Methodist Church; "Environmental Justice," "The Political Christian," and "Parenting for Peace."

Alexandria — February 7, 7 p.m. — First United Methodist Church; "Current Peace and Justice Issues in 1991."

Ruston — February 8, 1:30 p.m. — Informal interview with video to be broadcast the following Thursday on "Community Focus." Copies will be available later at the Conference Office.

Shreveport — February 9, 9-11 a.m. — Mangum United Methodist Church; "Biblical Foundations of Peacemaking" and "Current Peace and Justice Issues of 1991."

Baton Rouge — February 10, University United Methodist Church. During the 8:30 a.m. service they will conduct the Children's Time; 9:45-10:45 a.m., Carol and Tim will speak to a Sunday School class about "Parenting for Peace and Justice."

11 a.m. — St. Mark United Methodist Church — participate in service; speaking on "Current Peace and Justice Issue in 1991."

5 p.m. — University United Methodist Church; invitation by University's UMYF to all youth in the area to join in the fun game, "Peace Pursuit."

February 11, 10-11 a.m. — Informal discussion of "Current Issues with Peace and Justice." Place to be announced.

It's Subscription Renewal Time!

February is **Louisiana United Methodist** Month. That means that it is time to renew your subscription so that you will continue to receive the news of the Church in Louisiana and in the nation and world.

The cost of the Conference paper for 1991 is $12 per subscription. This is an increase over last year, the first increase since 1986. The new rate is in large part due to the upcoming postal rate increase.

To subscribe, simply fill in a subscription form at your local churches and turn it in to the church office, or send the subscription form below:

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Send this form with $12 per subscription to: Louisiana United Methodist, Louisiana Conference Council on Ministries, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802. Please make check payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference.

February Conference Calendar

Feb.-March	Board of Ordained Ministry: In-Parish Visit: COTO members to visit assigned 1st and 2nd year candidates
1	Conference Council on Ministries, First Church, Baton Rouge, 3:00 p.m.
1	Conference Board of Laity, Shoney's Restaurant, 3151 College Drive, Baton Rouge
1	Board of Ordained Ministry: Packets sent to those recommended for Probationary membership
1-4	National Camp Leaders Meeting, Palestine, TX
2	CCYM Meeting, Rayne Church, New Orleans
4-6	Minister's Week, SMU, Dallas
5-11	Peace with Justice Journey through Louisiana by Rev. Carol Windrum, General Board of Church and Society
6-25	World Council of Churches Assembly, Canberra, Australia
8-9	United Methodist Women Executive Committee Meeting, Tall Timbers
13	Ash Wednesday
14-16	DISCIPLE Training Program, Baton Rouge
15-March 1	Superintendents' Consultations with Bishop Oden
15-17	1991 Annual Meeting of the National Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, Scaritt-Bennett Center, Nashville
18	Annual Conference Worship Committee, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.
19	Clergy Income Tax Seminar, University Church, Baton Rouge, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
21	Pendleton Hospital Clergy Continuing Education Event: Healing Stories
27-28	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.

Bowl-A-Thon Set

The United Methodist Men is sponsoring a state-wide Bowl-A-Thon to benefit scouting and district programs running through the weekends of February 2-17, 1991. The wide variance of bowling league schedules has created a need to spread the time frame over a sixteen-day period that will include three weekends. When local conflicts occur, fellowships can participate by establishing a more convenient date. All funds, however, should be turned in by March 6, 1991.

Each fellowship may bowl in its own community or may elect to challenge a neighboring United Methodist fellowship and bowl together in friendly competition to see who can bowl the highest score and who can raise the most money. A district United Methodist Men's organization may also wish to organize district-wide competition in a central location.

BOWL-A-THON V will be a continuation of BOWL-A-THONS from previous years. As a result of last year's effort, $140,000 was raised for the the organization and $46,000 for local fellowships. One fellowship received a van, another was presented a large screen television, while three others received VCRs as a result of their outstanding achievements.

The concept is a simple one; yet, quite effective. The Men's Fellowship should first agree to participate; then select someone who will serve as BOWL-A-THON coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for recruiting bowlers (in teams of 6) and tabulating the final report to be sent to the Foundation. Participants will secure pledges from family members, church members, friends and neighbors. They will then participate in the activity during the designated time period by bowling three games, taking score sheets back to their sponsors and collecting. The coordinator will total all receipts, deduct 25% commission for the Men's Fellowship and forward the balance to the United Methodist Men Foundation by March 6. A commission of 25% will be given to all participating groups to defray any expenses and promote the work of the men's fellowship.

Every UMM's fellowship is encouraged to participate. BOWL-A-THON V offers an excellent opportunity to raise money for local fellowships, district programs, conference expenses, and national projects through the UMM Foundation. In addition, it provides a setting for local churches to enjoy recreational fellowship.

DISCIPLE
BIBLE STUDY

February 14-16, 1991
Have you registered?

Notices

Sing Unto the Lord!

As 10,000 or more United Methodists gather at the Centroplex in Baton Rouge on March 9, a wonderful opportunity is provided for various church-music groups to provide a witness in music. If your gospel quartet or ensemble, orchestra, bell choir or band would like to play in one of the foyers or approaches prior to the event, contact Dr. Warren Blakeman, 124 Lisa Lane, Mandeville, LA 70448, as soon as possible. A committee will try to select a least one representative group from each district.

Praise God, All You Peoples

Bishop William B. Oden will participate with Bishop Stanley Joseph Ott, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Baton Rouge Diocese, in an Ecumenical Prayer Service on Wednesday, January 23, at 7 p.m. The Reverend Chris Andrews and First United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge, will host the event. Everyone is welcome to share in this annual observance for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

United Methodist Women Sunday, January 27

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Needed: Bible 'encounters'

A recent Gallup poll puts a new twist on a familiar saying:

"The Bible is our most widely purchased but least read book."

Gallup's 28-page report, titled "The Role of the Bible in American Society," states that slightly more than half of U.S. adults—53 percent—read the Bible at least monthly.

Here's the twist: While concluding that the perennial bestseller may be the most widely read book in America, Gallup also found widespread, and apparently increasing, ignorance of the Bible's contents.

For example, only 37 percent of those surveyed could name the four Gospels! This is even lower than the pollster's 1982 finding—42 percent—on the same point.

Gallup's findings effectively refute simplistic "back to the Bible" formulas that equate mere exposure to Scripture with spiritual and moral renewal.

But we wish the Gallup organization would add an additional element to its polling: a comparison of attitudes and behavior among those who do and those who do not engage in serious Bible study on an ongoing basis in Sunday School or other group settings.

At least two crucial elements are likely in such settings that are easily missing among individual "Bible readers": the achievement of minimal biblical literacy and the dimension of depth.

Biblical literacy involves a basic grasp of the Bible's structure and content.

For example, memorizing the names of the Bible's books is insufficient as an end in itself. But it has validity as part of an overall effort to know the Bible's contents—including its stories, characters, and primary message of sin and redemption.

The dimension of depth goes beyond mere intellectual grasp of the Bible's content.

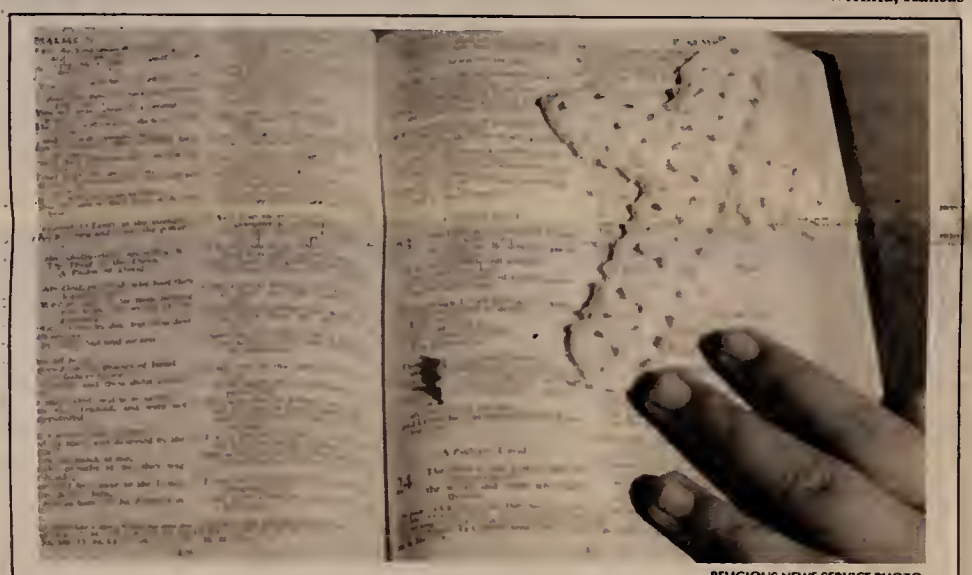
Rather, it involves life-transforming encounter with the the biblical witness to God's will for human life. Such encounter requires intentional immersing of oneself in the Scriptures so that the biblical story becomes an integral part of one's personal story.

Christmas, for example, remains a remote and impersonal event that only happened "out there" if it does not also take root "inside" as the birth of God in our life and world.

Congregations that foster intentional groups of Christians studying the Scriptures report powerful results—both on individual lives, on the church's life, and in the church's outreach to the community.

There is no lack of effective resources for Bible study that promote both literacy and depth. The "Disciple" series developed by Bishop Richard B. Wilke (Arkansas Area) and our church's publishing house is one good example. And there are others.

To increase the Bible's impact on life and society, however, our most basic need is an intentional commitment within every Christian congregation to provide people with opportunities for in-depth "Bible encounter"—and not mere "Bible reading."



RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

What do you think?

The editorial above contends that at least two crucial elements are missing from much Bible study: "achievement of minimal biblical literacy and the dimension of depth." What would you recommend be done by congregations and individuals to increase biblical literacy and in-depth involvement with the Bible? Send replies (maximum one double-spaced typewritten page) by Jan. 31 to "Think," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Letters to the Editor

'Reader's Digest' article contains 2 errors

I finally got to read the "Reader's Digest" article, titled "Look What They've Done To My Songs," that I had heard so much about (see UMR, Dec. 21).

It took several well-placed shots at entrenched church bureaucrats. While that is always fun in itself, it also reported two glaring errors.

The first was reporting that The United Methodist Church and other mainline churches have lost millions of members to conservative, evangelical and pentecostal churches.

Mainline churches have indeed lost millions of members—not to other churches but to the "world."

More members transfer into mainline churches from conservative churches than vice versa. We do have a membership problem as a denomination, but it is not because we are too liberal. I suspect it is because we do not adequately and faithfully address the life and death issues of our time.

The other major error was reporting that the renewal or pressure groups in the various mainline churches are non-political. These groups are *not* non-political. They are political in both the church and in the secular society and they are very good at it.

Their secular politics tend to be right-wing. And right-wing politics are politics as much as are left-wing politics or good old middle-of-the-road politics.

Jerry Milleson
Wichita, Kansas

Being post-death stewards

My wife and I have just executed what are commonly known as "living wills," that is, durable power of attorney for health care and directive to physicians, using the standard forms specified by the laws of our state (see UMR Editorial, Jan. 4).

In addition to copies to the person and alternates designated as our agents for health care decisions in the absence of our abilities to make such, we are sending a copy to our church so that our pastor and his successors in office will have this information.

Much has been said about stewardship in our churches and we keep careful account of financial contributions. Many congregations make talent surveys and have "personnel records" for utilizing the skills and knowledge of their members.

Perhaps it is time that we place greater emphasis on post-death use of our bodily gifts of God and, via "living wills," keep appropriate records of organ donations to those who may need them when we no longer do.

The pastor is often the person who can be key to the fulfillment of the good intentions of those who make living wills and organ donor-upon-death wills.

Charles Walton
Dripping Springs, Texas

Pontius' Puddle

Here I Stand

We should be candles, not flashlights

By STEVEN C. HEYDUCK

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Steven C. Heyduck is associate pastor of First United Methodist Church, Nacogdoches, Texas (Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

As I sat in a ministers' meeting, my fellow pastors pondered ways to rid our town of pornography, strip joints, and various other social evils.

I observed quietly as they discussed picketing, boycotting and letter writing—quiet, not because I supported any of the alleged evils, but because of a nagging feeling that somehow we were missing the point.

My concern became clearer to me when one minister began to speak about the owner of one of the particularly troublesome clubs in town.

This pastor shared the efforts that had thus far failed to shut down the business. We talked about legislation that would remove pornography from our town.

It became apparent that the real concern was to bankrupt such establishments. I thought: The Gospel is about changing people, not locking doors!

While it is true that, as Christian citizens in a republican democracy such as ours, we do have a responsibility to voice our concerns.

But this is not all we are to do. Beating pornography and alcohol suppliers from our city limits will no more affect the lives that are held captive to these vices than bombing Colombia would solve our drug problem.

Supply-side morality will not change lives. It is the demand that we must attack.

Crusaders often mention Jesus' reference to us as the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). They forget that one verse later Jesus tells us that we are the "light of the world."

We are called to let our "light so shine before all that they may see our good works" and glorify our Father in heaven.

"Let" is a passive word, which implies that what is important is seeing that which is illuminated by the light, not the act of shining it.

Jesus refers to us as candles. The light that candles radiate is not directional. Rather, it is light that fills the area in which the candle sits.

Our light as Christians, though, is often a flashlight, pointed in a particular but narrow direction.

We should take this difference seriously. When we shine ourselves as flashlights at others, we blind them. When we shine as candles, however, we enable all in our presence to see the truth of Christ.

Welcome to new UMR readers in Houston, Jasper and Decatur

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 850 member-families of John Wesley United Methodist Church and some 750 member-families of Westminster United Methodist Church, both in Houston, Texas; some 600 member-families of First United Methodist Church in Jasper, Texas (all in Texas Annual Conference); and some 400 member-families of First United Methodist Church in Decatur, Texas (North Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Houston, Jasper and Decatur, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Faithfully yours

My new dictionary strengthens 'ties that bind'

Switching dictionaries proved to be harder than I imagined.

Stephen Swecker

My 19-year-old son was partly to blame. He picked up on my hint and gave me a new Webster's for Christmas. Nifty, but what to do with the old one?

The dictionary I had been using is almost as old as Webster himself. My parents gave it to me as a high school graduation gift nearly 30 years ago. Its once-maroon cover long since has faded to off-pink.

I've spent lots of good times with the old volume. Research time. Browsing time. "Scrabble" time. I'm-right-and-you're-wrong time.

For all the usage the old volume endured, however, it contains jewels I still haven't examined and wish that I had.

My old dictionary also safeguarded a gem not attributable to Webster: a letter from my father. It has lodged there since my college days in Germany during the early 1960s.

Why I put the letter there in the first place is a mystery. But for me, it has been as much a part of the dictionary as the funny word at the bottom of page 1341, "sheepcot."

Dad's letter became one of the bonuses of using the dictionary. At unexpected times while I looked up a definition, the envelope would fall into my lap or onto the floor.

It was almost as if it were saying, "Here, Stephen, listen up again to your old man." And so I did over the years, reading and re-reading my father's words and conjuring up his presence in absentia.

His words were both reasonable and consoling: gentle counsel to a young man encountering the eternal tension of how to leave home and yet stay connected to home.

The letter did not resolve the tension. Yet it provided what a confused college student half a world away from home most needed: tangible proof that he was loved and not alone.

Hence, I've held on to that letter for dear life, particularly since my father died a few years ago. I've so identified it with its place in the old dictionary that the two gifts from my parents have seemed inseparable.

Dare I part them? It seems ridiculous to be concerned about such small things. Yet the Bible hints that when and how we do things—even humdrum things like switching dictionaries and relocating old letters—are like the hairs on our head: "numbered" and of concern to God.

My father's letter now resides amid the pages of the new dictionary from my son. It wasn't easy trading old Off-pink for new Dark Brown. But I'm pleased with the symbolic uniting of the two most important males in my life and the visible threads of love that bind our three generations.

The familiar hymn has it right: "ties" that bind us—mundane though they might be—truly are blessed. They provide cause for gratitude that, despite everything, we have each other—families, friends, colleagues, the human race.

Best of all in times such as these, as the world flirts again with the rending possibility of war, they point us to the reality of One who purposefully binds all of life together.

—*STEPHEN L. SWECKER*

Mr. Swecker is the Faith Forum page editor.

What others are saying

"One of the unique qualities of Jesus Christ was an ability to move beyond theological 'isms' to focus on people. People were treated as unique creatures of God with special needs and special abilities."

—**United Methodist Bishop R. Sheldon Duecker, Chicago Area**

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: James 2:14)

Readings for week of Jan. 21

Monday: Psalms 62
Tuesday: Psalms 63:1-8
Wednesday: 1 Samuel 3:1-10
Thursday: 1 Samuel 3:11-20
Friday: John 1:35-42
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 6:1-11
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Africa University Faculty of the College of Theology Position in Old Testament

The Africa University, established by the United Methodist Church at Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, will open in March, 1992. The College of Theology of the Africa University is a community of learning whose purpose is to educate women and men to be pastors and teachers of the Christian Gospel for the Churches of Africa. The college invites applications from candidates who are qualified to teach at the undergraduate to graduate level in the field of Old Testament Studies.

Qualifications— candidates must:

1. Hold a Ph.D. or equivalent degree in the field of Old Testament.
2. Be able to teach and read in English; the ability to read and speak either French or Portuguese would be useful.
3. Have demonstrated achievement and/or potential in African theological education as reflected in the purpose of the college: instruction, scholarship, research, and publication.
4. Be committed Christian men and women, preferable ministers, who are able to prepare adequately dynamic ministerial and lay leadership for the church in contemporary Africa.
5. Be able to relate intellectual, professional, and spiritual dimensions of theological education to the ministry of the church.
6. Work in the ecumenical spirit of the college while respecting the history and tradition of the United Methodist Church.

Faculty salary and allowances are competitive and commensurate with academic qualifications and experience.

Letters of application, giving date of availability, curriculum vitae, and names and addresses of three references familiar with the candidate's personal, professional, and academic life should be sent by March 1, 1991 to:

**The Dean— College of Theology
Africa University
c/o B. P. 1696
Kinshasa 1
Republic of Zaire, Africa.**

with copies to:

**Division of Ordained Ministry
P.O. Box 87
Nashville, TN 37202, USA**

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Daniel J. Louis, General Manager
John A. Lovelace, Managing Editor
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Stephen L. Swecker, Faith Forum Page Editor
Kay Fielder, Local Editions

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Faith watch

1990 'NEWSMAKER': Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has been named Newsmaker of the Year for 1990 by the "Christian Century," the ecumenical weekly publisbed in Chicago. "Saddam Hussein's sbrewd exploitation of religious faith makes him an obvious cboice for selection as the Person of the Year in religion—that individual who for good or evil was the most significant religious figure on tbe world scene in 1990," tbe Rev. James M. Wall, editor, writes in the magazine's Jan. 2-9 issue. Dr. Wall is a member of the United Methodist Northern Illinois Annual Conference.

'OUTPOURING' ASKED: Bishop Melvin Talbert, secretary of tbe United Metbodist Council of Bishops, told an interfaith crowd of 6,000 people that overflowed San Francisco's St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral that "only if members of our society show an outpouring of opposition will we not experience a catastrophic war." The Jan. 6 event was one of many across the country called to express opposition to U.S. preparations for war in the Persian Gulf. Bishop Talbert was recently part of an 18-member delegation of U.S. religious leaders who visited the Middle East, including Baghdad, Iraq.

BIG BEQUEST: One of the largest gifts to an educational institution in recent years was recently donated to Asbury Tbeological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky., by a retired insurance executive who died last year. A bequest of $38.9 million was made by Ralpb Waldo Beeson, former executive of the Liberty National Life Insurance Company in Birmingham. Asbury is a 67-year-old independent seminary witb about 700 students, many of them United Methodists. The gift is expected to be used for the school's endowment, a new preacbing center, distinguished professors chairs, and scholarships. Samford University in Birmingham, related to tbe Alabama State Baptist Convention, also received $38.9 million from the Beeson bequest.

MINISTER CALLED: University Christian Church of Fort Worth, with 4,400 members one of the largest congregations in tbe Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has called the Rev. Eugene Brice, 59, as its senior minister effective March 15. He bas been senior minister at Country Club Christian Church in Kansas City, Mo., the past 12 years. He succeeds the Rev. A. M. Pennybacker, wbo resigned last spring to become professor of preacbing at the Disciples-related Lexington (Ky.) Theological Seminary.

Eugene Brice

ASSEMBLIES HEAD DIES: The Rev. Thomas F. Zimmerman, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God for 26 years and a leader of several evangelical organizations, died of congestive heart failure Jan. 2 in Springfield, Ill., at age 78. Mr. Zimmerman was a founder of the National Religious Broadcasters in 1944 and recently served as chairman of its Etbics and Financial Integrity Commission. He was president of tbe National Association of Evangelicals in 1960-61, the first Pentecostal elected to the post, and chaired six meetings of the Pentecostal World Conference.

SEMINARY AIDED: Hartford (Conn.) Seminary has received a grant totalling $657,000 from the Lilly Endowment Inc., of Indianapolis to support its leadership education programs for regional and national executives of cburch-related groups.

Compiled from news and staff reports

How safe is UM money?

Denomination's financial officials safeguard funds through careful deposits, conservative investments

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

If you're concerned about what might bappen to The United Methodist Churcb's money in light of recent bank, savings and loan association and credit union troubles, don't worry.

In contrast to the turmoil caused some local congregations by the recent Rhode Island banking crisis (see UMR, Jan. 11), the denomination's money is kept "as safe as anybody can make it," said tbe Rev. Clifford S. Droke.

He's chief executive of the General Council on Finance and Administration based in Evanston, Ill. and tbe denomination's treasurer.

A conservative strategy of insured bank deposits and diversified long-term investments safeguards the denomination's money, he added.

Dr. Droke said the stewards of the church's money feel their responsibility deeply.

"We know that this is not easy money to come by," he said. "We get our money from the contributions of people in local congregations.

"It bas to be guarded carefully—and we do."

Dr. Droke, Gary K. Bowen, head of financial services, and Elizabeth A. Taylor, comptroller, outlined for the Reporter the finance agency's policies on cash deposits and long-term investments.

Typically the finance agency has deposits in about a dozen banks. They're in Washington, Nashville, New York, Chicago and Dayton, Obio. These banks help meet fiscal needs of the church's general boards and agencies located in those cities, they said.

"We never use savings and loan associations or credit unions for deposit or investment," said Mr. Bowen. "For deposits, we use only federally chartered national banks insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation."

Ms. Taylor added that banks meeting those criteria are then evaluated in a highly competitive bidding process that includes consulting ratings by the Shesbunoff bank rating agency based in Austin, Texas.

Quality, economy cited

"It comes down to what quality of service tbe bank gives us for the most economical price," she explained.

Cash deposits and long-term investments are reviewed quarterly by the finance agency's 13-member investment committee. Some committee members are elected directors of tbe churcb's general finance agency; others are "selected specifically for their financial expertise," said Mr. Bowen.

He and Ms. Taylor serve on that committee, along with professional investment advisers and auditors from a firm tbat reviews investment performance.

"We tell the investment committee everything," said Mr. Bowen. "Wbere the money's deposited, how our investments performed, what worked, what didn't."

Regarding the finance agency's investments, Dr. Droke said that the agency relies on professional investment counselors to manage its stocks and bonds. With rare exceptions, the investments carry the least amount of financial risk.

'Can't touch principal'

"We're managing a lot of money people have given to tbe church for its mission and ministry," Dr. Droke explained. "Most times, because of the stipulations surrounding tbe gift, we can't even toucb the principal."

Two church agencies for wbicb the finance council does not administer funds are the General Board of Pensions and The United Metbodist Publishing House.

Diane Pinney, treasurer for tbe General Board of Pensions, said the retirement fund totals about $3.5 billion.

Like the finance agency, tbe pension board invests its funds in highly secure stocks and bonds tbat are reviewed regularly by an investment committee, she said.

"We feel that the funds are protected from the volatility of the marketplace," Ms. Pinney told the Reporter.

Larry L. Wallace, Publishing House treasurer, said the church's publisher has $56 million in its pension fund and $21 million in reserves earmarked for such things as construction of a new beadquarters in Nashville. Again, these funds are managed by professional investment counselors whose performance is reviewed semiannually by an investment committee and an auditor.

United Methodist Long-Term Investments
(As of Sept. 30, 1990)

Board of Pensions	$3.5 Billion
Global Ministries	$155 Million (Pensions)
	$68 Million (Reserves)
Publishing House	$56 Million (Pensions)
	$21 Million (Reserves)
Higher Education	$32 Million
Finance Agency	$14.3 Million*

*Includes investments for General Council on Ministries, Board of Discipleship and designated gifts to the denomination.

Church and Society	$7.9 Million

Sources: General Council on Finance and Administration, General Board of Pensions, UM Publishing House

UMR Illustration

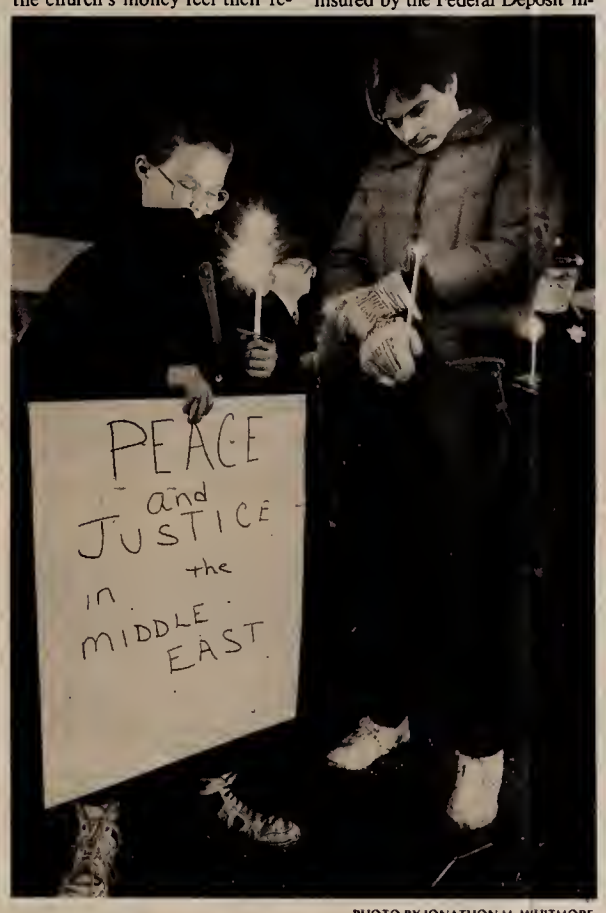

PHOTO BY JONATHON M. WHITMORE

Prayers for peace abound

DANVERS, Mass.—Richard Lucius (left) and Craig Kidger of Essex, Mass., pray silently at a recent candlelight vigil sponsored by the Danvers (Mass.) Clergy Association for Peace in the Middle East. Similar vigils took place in numerous communities across the U.S. as the Jan. 15 deadline approached for Iraq to leave occupied Kuwait.

Coordinating agency's spring trip to Europe is on—for now

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

With one eye on the Persian Gulf crisis and the other on the U.S. economic situation, the church's General Council on Ministries has reaffirmed plans to hold its Spring 1991 meeting in Zurich, Switzerland.

But there will be provisions for postponement if necessary.

Last October, with 96 of its 133 members voting, the church's central coordinating agency voted 66-30 not only to hold an unprecedented meeting overseas but to precede that meeting with small-team visits to United Methodists in Africa, the Pbilippines and Europe. Those are the areas outside the U.S. where United Methodists are organized into central conferences.

The venture was proposed in response to a self-generated question under which the council operates: "What does it mean to be a global church?"

Costs, estimated at $1,640 per person, are to be met from the council's budget of $115,000 for the Spring 1991 meeting plus savings from the cancelled Spring 1990 meeting—$100,000—and $31,000 unspent from meetings in 1988 and 1989.

Total costs—visitations on three continents and the Zurich meeting—are estimated at $205,000.

In December, the coordinating council's counterpart body, the church's General Council on Finance and Administration, voted 18-12 to ask the General Council on Ministries to reconsider its plan to meet in Europe.

This is believed to be the first time since the two general councils were created in 1972 that one has asked tbe other to reconsider an action.

The General Council on Ministries, acting Jan. 10 via a telephone conference call of its 21-member executive committee, did reconsider the full council's October action.

Then, on a unanimous vote with one abstention, the executive committee voted to proceed with the plan approved in October, including the pre-meeting visits in the Philippines, Africa and Europe.

But, also by two unanimous votes, the executive committee asked a sub-unit from the council to prepare a contingency plan for the Spring 1991 meeting "in the event that world or national situations make it necessary for the experience to be delayed" or, more precisely, "if the United States is at war." This sub-unit will meet later this month.

The council's president, Bishop Felton E. May, had indicated last October that, out of sensitivity for citizens of sovereign Native American nations—some of whom had challenged the overseas visits and meeting—he would visit some Indian nations this spring and would not go to Europe.

During last week's conference call he again voiced concern for Native Americans.

He also endorsed inclusion of "national situations" as one necessity for the council to have a contingency plan and noted that the number of unemployed persons in the U.S. "is growing every day."

CLASSIFIED

REO BIRO MISSION NEEOS missionary secondary mathematics teacher and MS degree mental health counselor. Resumes to: Kenneth Ludwig, HC 69, Box 700, Beverly, KY 40913.

OIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES. Salary and benefits commensurate with training and experience. Apply to: SPRC, Lancaster United Methodist Church, 918 West Avenue J, Lancaster, CA 93534-3499, (805) 942-0419 prior to January 30.

ASSISTANT ORGANIST (PART-TIME), First United Methodist Church, Oallas, TX. Send resume to: Debbie Heyt, 1928 Ross Avenue, Oallas, TX 75201 by February 25.

DIRECTOR YOUTH MINISTRY for a dynamic evangelical youth program. Must have 2-3 years experience, college graduate. Include on resume personal faith statement, personal calling to youth ministry. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Dennis Hardin c/o Hyde Park UMC, 500 W. Platt St., Tampa, FL 33606.

FULL-TIME OIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN Education/Youth. Salary $20,000 plus benefits. Resume/references lo: Dr. Wayne Leaver, 81 Pondella Road, North Fort Myers, FL 33903.

ASSOCIATE MINISTER INTERESTEO IN youth ministry needed for growing 800-member church. Recent seminary graduate preferred. Call/write: Dr. T.A. Ounbar, St. Luke-Simpson UMC, 1500 Country Club Road, Lake Charles, LA 70605. (318) 474-1500.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES Jacksonville, Florida Church. Youth ministry experience preferred; active youth program. Salary $20,000 + . Benefits provided. Contact: Senior Pastor, Ortega United Methodist Church, 4807 Roosevelt Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32210. Phone: (904) 389-5556.

DIRECTOR OF YOUNG ADULT Ministries for a 3,000-member congregation. Seeking an energetic, organized young adult who will develop a new program ministry to reach young adults, 18 to 35 years. Program Office, First United Methodist Church, 330 N. Broadway, Wichita, KS 67202. Application deadline is February 4.

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY LIFE CENTER and Recreational Ministries. To direct ministry of Family Life Center including exercise, recreation, and athletic activities for persons of all ages in church of 2100 members. Salary negotiable. Inquire: Search Committee, First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 218, Gastonia, NC 28053.

Struggling study panel OKs changes in baptism meaning

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Struggle and sometimes heated debate have brought United Methodism's special study committee on baptism to the point of recommending major changes in the way the church understands that sacrament.

As of its meeting Jan. 8-9, the committee's report recommends that United Methodist congregations:

- Highly encourage infant baptism and recommend that it occur as early as possible;
- Affirm that baptism initiates a person into full membership in a local church regardless of age. Both infant and adult baptism are endorsed. Sprinkling, pouring and immersion are identified as acceptable modes of baptism.
- Strongly discourage infant dedication. This rite is reportedly used in some United Methodist congregations based on the understanding that a person must reach an "age of reason" to competently make a profession of faith for baptism.
- State that no ritual for infants shall be considered a substitute for baptism;
- Offer a new ritual similar to what now is confirmation that will be called "profession of baptismal faith."
- Encourage training leading to baptism and to profession of baptismal faith.
- Use new categories of "baptized members" and "professing members" (those who have publicly professed their baptismal faith) for local church membership rolls. These categories would replace "preparatory members" and "full members" rolls now in use.
- State that there are "no conditions of life which exclude persons from the sacrament of baptism." Specifically cited are "age or intellectual ability, race or nationality, sexual gender or identity, class or handicapping conditions."

Changes not easy

Many of those provisions did not come easily.

The first hot spot was the name change for the proposed revised ritual supplanting what now is known as confirmation. While some said that the term "profession of faith" should be used, others said a reference to baptism should be included with such a name as "affirmation of baptism."

With the committee split, the Rev. Thomas A. Langford Jr. of Duke Divinity School suggested an alternative name, "profession of baptismal faith." This name found favor with all committee members but one.

Bishop Ole Borgen, a faculty member at Asbury Theological Seminary, cast the dissenting vote.

Bishop Borgen said he strongly disagreed with the direction in which the paper was moving and that he wanted no part of it.

The centrality of baptism in the paper was almost "baptism-olatry," he said.

Substitute for faith

"Baptism is used as a substitute for faith in spite of all the nice talk about faith," the bishop continued.

"I guarantee in 10 to 20 years we will be a dead, formalistic, ritualistic church. I have seen it," be added. Bishop Borgen, now retired, served as an active bisbop in northern Europe, where "state" churches are common.

Several committee members, including the Rev. Gayle C. Felton, faculty member at Duke Divinity School, strongly disagreed that the paper substituted baptism for faith.

"No one wants to make baptism an idol," responded committee chairperson, the Rev. Mark C. Trotter of San Diego.

"The sacrament is a means of faith, rather than the source," he said.

Sexual issue debated

Another hot spot erupted over the words "sexual preference" in the paper's paragraph denouncing exclusion of anyone from baptism.

The Rev. Garnett Wilder of Snellville, Ga., said that the issue was not just a debate but "we are talking about a war within tbe United Methodist Church. I don't think it's appropriate for us to add fuel to the fire."

Others disagreed, saying they felt the paper should address current issues within the church.

The term "sexual preference" was amended to "sexual gender and identity" (see paragraph above).

In the final vote, the committee overwhelmingly supported the revised paper 14-2. Bishop Borgen and the Rev. John Ewing of Titusville, Fla., dissented.

The approved paper will be presented to the church's General Board of Discipleship in early March. It may also be reviewed by the Council of Bisbops at its April meeting.

A final vote by the Board of Discipleship for reference to the church's 1992 legislative General Conference is expected in October.

Copies of the revised paper are available from the Rev. Cbarles R. Kishpaugh, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nasbville, Tenn. 37202-0840.

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Faith connections

LAITY ADDRESS ENTRIES: It's time to enter your manuscript for the Laity Address for the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky. Sponsored by the National Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, the search will be open until June 30. The 1992 theme is "Connecting faith with everyday life." For complete rules, write the Section on the Ministry of the Laity, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0840.

TIME TO PETITION: All United Methodists are reminded that they are entitled to submit petitions to the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky., said Carolyn Marshall, secretary for the denomination's top legislative body. About 2,700 petitions were received for the 1988 General Conference. Qualifications for petitions are listed in The Book of Discipline. Petitions should be sent to Ms. Odell Thompson, 1740 Sixth St., Beloit, Wisc. 53511.

HEADS DEVELOPMENT: The Rev. Sanford D. Coon has been named president of the United Methodist Reporter Foundation, effective Jan. 1. He has some 20 years' experience as a pastor in the Southwest Texas Annual Conference and, more recently, as a leader of financial development campaigns for a national fund-raising organization. The San Antonio native is married and has two children. With the UMR Foundation's assets exceeding $2.5 million, Mr. Coon's first task is completion of a $4 million campaign to build debt-free and permanently endow the maintenance for a new Communications Center to house the newspaper and its related operations. Longer range, the foundation is developing an endowment to underwrite a part of the cost of each UMR subscription as well as other related ministries. Mr. Coon succeeds the Rev. John Flynn, who resigned at year's end.

Sanford Coon

KING OBSERVANCE: United Methodist-related Emory University will mark the birthday of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. with a series of public observances Jan. 22-27. A forum, "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?" is expected to assess the role of education in the struggle for racial justice.

SECRETARY NAMED: Mary A. Love of Charlotte, N.C., will become the second administrative secretary of the Pan-Methodist Cooperation Commission in June. Ms. Love, a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, is editor of church school literature for her denomination. She succeeds United Methodist C. Faith Richardson of Newtonville, Mass.

FRAGMENTED?: The Pan-Methodist Cooperation Commission has announced plans for the fifth Consultation of Methodist Bishops March 20-22 in St. Simons Island, Ga. The theme will be "Methodism in the 21st Century: Fragmented or United?"

United Methodist doctors head for Liberia

Volunteers join church-sponsored emergency medical teams helping war-torn nation

From news and staff reports

Catch the spirit of this United Methodist joining an emergency medical team this month in war-ravaged Liberia:

"I feel that I was called to be a doctor for a purpose," said Dr. Donald Rudy of Glencoe, Minn.

"I just feel it is my duty as a Christian to help the people in Liberia. If people have a great medical need, I feel honored to be asked."

He and Dr. Michael Pieh of Nashville will be on international teams sponsored by Church World Service and Witness, the relief division of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. Sources of special funding for these teams include the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Kim David

Another team, sent Dec. 7, has set up a clinic at a hospital in Monrovia, the capital city. That team includes United Methodists Dr. Kim David from Denmark and Samuel Pieh, a public health specialist from Sierra Leone (see UMR, Dec. 21) and a brother of Dr. Michael Pieh.

Dr. Pieh left the U.S. Jan 5. A native of Sierra Leone who attended school in Liberia, he has worked in disease prevention. Members of his church in Nashville, West End United Methodist, encouraged him to go.

"The primary concern is to be able to teach good health education and probably introduce mass immunization," he told United Methodist News Service after a Jan. 4 appointment service in New York.

Dr. Pieh expects "an epidemic of infectious diseases, especially cholera, measles and tuberculosis."

Dr. Rudy, a family practitioner, was scheduled to leave with the third group on Jan. 14. He was personally invited by Norma Kehrberg, chief staff executive of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, who knew of his prior missionary service in Africa.

Dr. Rudy and his wife, Ruth, were missionaries to Zimbabwe through the General Board of Global Ministries from 1962-75.

Dr. Rudy has also done short-term volunteer mission work in Kenya and most recently did surgery at Chicuque Hospital in war-torn Mozambique.

The 60-year-old doctor said he applied for the Liberian assignment three months ago but was waiting for conditions to stabilize.

Now that there is a cease-fire in Liberia's civil war, he plans to stay in Monrovia one month. He said he is not sure of working conditions in that area but expects to work in established medical clinics.

"If I can take it in a war zone like Mozambique, I can take it in Liberia," Dr. Rudy told the Reporter before leaving the country.

Associate Editor Denise Johnson Stovall contributed to this report.

Iraq's 'human face' evades TV producer on peace trip

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—A TV producer went to Iraq in December in search of the "human face" of the enemy, but said he found instead governmental "talking heads."

Bill Dale of United Methodist Communications in Nashville accompanied an 18-member delegation of Protestant and Greek Orthodox leaders from the National Council of Churches on their "peace pilgrimage" to Cyprus, Jordan and Iraq. Mr. Dale had planned to film a documentary on everyday life in Baghdad.

"I wanted an opportunity to talk to people who are just everyday kinds of folks," Mr. Dale told United Methodist News Service, "but that did not present itself." Mr. Dale was producer-director for two recent documentaries on ABC-TV.

Close organization of the group's activities by the Iraqi government and a scant two days in the Iraqi capital combined to thwart his hopes. "We were kept at a hotel between scheduled meetings," Mr. Dale said.

Hussein access denied

The group had pressured governmental officials for a meeting with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, but its request was denied.

"We were not able to meet with him," Mr. Dale said, "but we had contact with high-level people."

Those people included Mohammed Saheed Alsahhaf, Iraq's state secretary of foreign affairs. Mr. Dale described him as "cordial" and competent in the English language.

"He listened to delegation members when they told him that they represent a large element of U.S. people who do not feel war is a viable option," Mr. Dale said. "They asked for his help in dissuading his government from the policies it is holding.

"He spoke authoritatively ... and defensively about the Iraqi understanding of the issues and made it clear that the Iraqis will not be pushed around," he continued. "And he blamed the U.S. government for the present stalemate."

Mr. Dale reported that the spokesman boasted to the delegation, that, in the event of war, three U.S. citizens will die for every Iraqi killed.

"The failure to meet with Hussein was particularly disappointing because the head of the delegation had planned to brief President Bush after the group's return," Mr. Dale said.

Delegation chair and Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning met with President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker two days after returning to the United States Dec. 21.

Language barrier

A brief government-supervised car tour of Baghdad was the only chance Mr. Dale had to see what was going on around the city, he said. His brief contact with one citizen and the accompanying opportunity for useable footage was short-circuited by the language barrier.

"His English was so poor, I just gave up," Mr. Dale said.

A side trip to a war monument was especially sobering, Mr. Dale added. "The monument was built to commemorate the Iran-Iraq war and is pretty gruesome," he said.

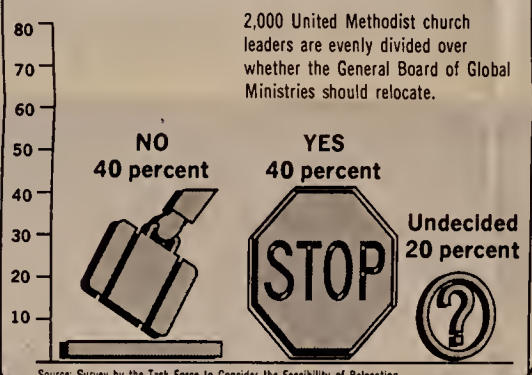
"We drove through two giant arches composed of swords, each held by a fist—Hussein's fists. And dangling from the swords were huge nets filled with actual helmets of Iranian soldiers," he said.

Baghdad itself exhibited a "repressed atmosphere," Mr. Dale added.

"I did not see a lot of joy. The city itself was fairly grim."

United Methodist Snapshot

Should the global missions board remain in New York City?



Bishop: Use 'creativity' against drugs

United Methodist News Service

United Methodist Bishop Felton E. May began his first week back in Harrisburg, Pa., by censuring what he called lack of U.S. government leadership in the struggle against drugs.

The bishop returned to Harrisburg the first of January after a yearlong special assignment in Washington, where he coordinated the denomination's anti-drug efforts. He will continue to lead the national effort this year from his Harrisburg office.

During his special assignment, Bishop May also directed a pilot program aimed at opposing drugs and violence in sections of the nation's capital and neighboring Prince Georges County, Md.

He said during a Jan. 3 news conference that, since August 1990, U.S. government has mobilized more than 450,000 military troops for Operation Desert Shield. The government remains reluctant to put forth the same effort against drugs, alcohol abuse and homelessness, he added.

The readying and deployment of troops for possible war in the Persian Gulf indicate that the nation should be able to use "the same creativity" against drugs and alcohol abuse, he said.

Recalling his experiences in an Army field hospital during the 1950s, he said he believes similar tactics and resources could help "provide counseling and health care for those who are in need."

Also necessary to stem the drug crisis, Bishop May said, is "forthright government leadership."

Bishop May states that the government has overlooked root causes of drug abuse—lack of jobs, illiteracy, homelessness.

Harrisburg is among eight cities in which the church's pilot project will be replicated. Other cities are Detroit; Boston; New York; Cleveland; Wilmington, Del.; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Bishop May said he plans active involvement in other efforts to address drug and alcohol abuse and violence, including organizing a coalition of area religious leaders to PennFree, a state-run anti-drug program. He said he also plans to call for a treatment-on-demand policy for drug addicts in the area.

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Pollster George Gallup combines faith and facts

When George H. Gallup Jr. was nine years old and living in the family farmhouse north of Princeton, he heard a voice from beyond surround him and say, "Be good."

Now 60, Mr. Gallup remembered the incident in a recent interview: "Who knows what it was? The thing is that it left a big impression on me."

George Gallup

A spiritual man in a field that prizes hard facts, Mr. Gallup studied religion as a Princeton undergraduate and served as a parish assistant at a black church in Galveston, Texas, before finally following in his father's footsteps as one of the nation's leading pollsters.

Mr. Gallup and his brother, Alec, are co-chairmen of The Gallup Organization Inc., now owned by Selection Research Inc. In addition to other responsibilities, Mr. Gallup's greatest satisfaction seems to come from his job as executive director of the 14-year-old Princeton Religion Research Center.

In recent years, the center's profile has increased with the televangelism scandals, the rise of the Moral Majority and greater role of the nation's Roman Catholic bishops in public life.

"It's really peaking," Mr. Gallup said. "First of all, the media have become more aware that religion is important in people's lives. And the failure of the material world is a horrible problem. People really need hope, and the church is still the most responsible institution in society."

A tall man with a pastoral bearing, Mr. Gallup still flirts with becoming a priest, saying he is a frustrated preacher. But the call into the polling business, invented by his father in the 1930s, was too strong to resist.

"I felt it was a fascinating field, and if I could probe the inner life I could get an insight into American life," he said.

As a pollster and an evangelical Christian, having a sense of mission has never been a problem for Mr. Gallup. Alison, 30, the oldest of his three children, works with him at the religion research center. His other two children are sons.

"I am dazzled by him," she said. "He is one of the most amazing preachers. He's full of statistics and compassion."

On matters of faith, Mr. Gallup described his late father as a "rational Christian," for whom a mysterious and all-powerful God defied all laws of probability. Mr. Gallup considers himself to be an evangelical Episcopalian who is still searching for the still, small voice of God.

Mr. Gallup said the term "evangelical" has been distorted. "When you say you are an evangelical, people automatically think you're a racist or a redneck," he said. "But my position is that most Christians are credally evangelicals."

Along with sociologist Margaret Poloma, Mr. Gallup is working on a book about the effectiveness of prayer. His latest findings show that the more people pray and develop a spiritual life, the happier and more productive they are.

This story is adapted from an article by Deborah Kovach in the Trenton Times in Trenton, N.J.

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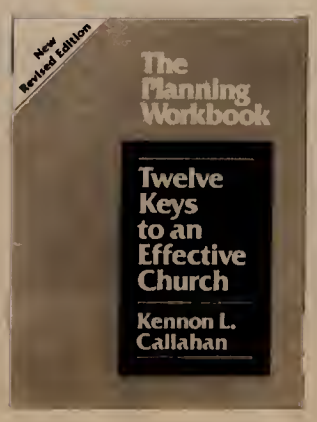

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Raymond UMC — Rev. Michael L. Hammett
Elton UMC — Rev. Michael L. Hammett
Rayne UMC — Rev. G. Larry Maxwell Sr.
Branch UMC — Rev. G. Larry Maxwell Sr.
Ebenezer UMC — Rev. G. Larry Maxwell Sr.
Roanoke UMC — Rev. Leon A. Boggs
Wesley UMC, Crowley — Rev. Leon A. Boggs
Maplewood UMC — Rev. Howard B. Cbilds
Henning Mem UMC — Dr. Donald J. Hall
Wesley UMC, Sulpbur — Rev. M. Ray Holt
Hackberry UMC — Rev. M. Ray Holt
Westlake UMC — Rev. Jack D. Phelps

Monroe District —
Baskin UMC — Rev. Dewayne C. Bricker
Reily Mem UMC — Rev. Ray R. Spiller
Mer Rouge UMC — Dr. W. Ed Parks Sr.
First UMC, Columbia — Rev. Hulen C. Warren Jr.
Crowville UMC — Rev. Alfred C. Bakewell III
Epps UMC — Rev. Gary L. Elliott
Pioneer UMC — Rev. Gary L. Elliott
Grayson UMC — Rev. Minns S. Robertson
Kelly UMC — Rev. Minns S. Robertson
First UMC, LK Providence — Rev. John M. Downs
Mangham UMC — Rev. James E. Wilson
First UMC, Monroe — Dr. William C. Blakely
Memorial UMC — Rev. Richard R. Meek
Reveille UMC — Rev. Howard L. Hudson
St. Paul UMC — Rev. Edward Thomas
St. Pauls UMC, Monroe — Rev. W. Odell Simmons
Lea Joyner Mem UMC — Rev. Joe D. Solomon
First UMC, Oak Grove — Rev. Stepben P. Carter
Rayville UMC — Rev. Frank M. Jones
Holly Ridge UMC — Rev. Frank M. Jones
Bartholomew UMC — Rev. James E. Constable
St. Joseph UMC — Rev. Donald R. Morgan
First UMC, Waterproof — Rev. Donald R. Morgan
Wesley UMC — Rev. Donald R. Morgan
First UMC, Harrisonburg — Rev. M. Stuart Sherman
First UMC, Tallulah — Rev. B. Ramon Warren
St. Peter UMC — Rev. Joe Brown
First UMC, W. Monroe — Rev. William D. Peeples
McGuire UMC — Rev. Michael D. McLaurin
Woodlawn UMC — Rev. Cecil C. Mims
First UMC, Winnsboro — Rev. Douglas R. Foreman
Boeuf Prairie UMC — Rev. Lillard R. Bevill
Newellton Union Church — Rev. Kenneth M. Graham Jr.

New Orleans District —
Belle Chasse UMC — Rev. Tommy R. Bergeron Sr.
Hope Chapel UMC — Rev. Mark E. Crosby
Arabi UMC — Rev. Robert W. Bengtson
St. James UMC, Convent — Rev. Curtis Johnson
Ninde Chapel UMC — Rev. Curtis Johnson
St. Charles UMC — Rev. Mark R. Martin
Grand Isle UMC — Rev. Gordon L. Smith Sr.
First UMC, Gretna — Rev. Bob L. Lawton
First UMC, Kenner — Rev. Robert W. Peterson
Thomas UMC — Rev. James S. Davidson
St. James UMC, Hahnville — Rev. James S. Davidson
Lutcher UMC — Rev. Charles P. Strong
Lutcher Chapel UMC — Rev. William L. Jones
St. Landry UMC — Rev. William L. Jones
Metairie UMC — Rev. Michael E. Ricke
Messiah UMC — Mr. George Coverdale, Treas.
Munholland UMC — Rev. Robert L. Potter
St. Matthews UMC — Rev. William I. Eubanks
Asbury UMC, New Orleans — Rev. Andrew J. Douglas
St. Matthew UMC — Rev. Andrew J. Douglas
Brooks UMC — Dr. Samuel W. Walker Sr.
Grace UMC — Rev. Nathaniel P. Williams
Felicity UMC — Rev. Marva L. Mitchell
Laharpe UMC — Rev. Purcell Churcb Jr.
Thompson UMC — Rev. Purcell Cburch Jr.
Lake Vista UMC — Rev. Alan D. Einsel
Napoleon AV/Parker Mem UM — Rev. M. Douglas Ezell
Phillips Mem UMC — Rev. Percell Church Sr.
Shaw Temple UMC — Rev. Percell Cburch Sr.
Rayne Memorial UMC — Dr. Clyde C. Frazier Jr.
Williams UMC — Rev. Burnell Bell
St. Luke's UMC — Rev. James F. Comer
Trinity UMC — Rev. Dorothy M. McGowen

North Shore District —
Amite UMC — Rev. Kenneth W. Irby
Independence UMC — Rev. Kenneth W. Irby
Live Oak UMC — Rev. Eddie Francis
Marys Chapel UMC — Rev. Eddie Francis
Elizabeth Sullivan Mem UM — Rev. John R. Johns
Thirkield UMC — Rev. Wesley R. Cyprian
Harrys Chapel UMC — Rev. Wesley R. Cyprian
Center UMC — Ms. Ollie Kreutz, Treas.
Darlington UMC — Ms. Louise Kemp, Treas.
First UMC, Covington — Rev. Theo S. Standley
Waldheim UMC — Rev. Ester L. Hammond
Days UMC — Rev. Johnny Clark
First UMC, Denham Springs — Rev. Steven M. Spurlock
Roberts UMC — Rev. Wilbur G. C. Davis Sr.
St. Luke UMC — Rev. Wilbur G. C. Davis Sr.
Fisher UMC — Rev. Willis W. Dear
Greensburg UMC — Mrs. Marlene Hagan
Wesley Chapel UMC — Mrs. Robert Cornette
First UMC, Hammond — Rev. Charles B. Humphreys
Mt. Hermon UMC — Rev. Barbara S. Duke
Lacombe UMC — Rev. Becky Conner
Live Oak UMC — Rev. John E. Scarf
Mangum Chapel UMC — Rev. Mike Polk
James Chapel UMC — Rev. Mike Polk
Loranger UMC — Rev. Percy Mac Frazier
St. Timothy On N/Sbore UMC — Rev. J. Lawrence Maddin
Montpelier UMC — Dr. Charles F Scott
Talisheek UMC — Rev. Jeffery D. Conner
First UMC, Ponchatoula — Rev. Larry D. Robertson
Lees Landing UMC — Rev. Larry D. Robertson
Wesley Chapel UMC — Rev. Edwin J. Barksdale
Aldersgate UMC — Rev. Cliff C. Wright Jr.
First UMC, Slidell — Rev. Dewitt M. Ginn
Hartzell Mt. Zion UMC — Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell
First UMC, Springfield — Rev. Gene M. Faurie
Maurepas UMC — Rev. Gene M. Faurie
Newell UMC — Rev. Louis A. Smith
Nesom Mem Tickfaw UMC — Rev. E. Rand Guy
Pine Grove UMC — Rev. E. Rand Guy
Sun UMC — Rev. Karl D. Wood
Bush UMC — Rev. Karl D. Wood
Livingston UMC — Rev. J. Penn Morgan

Ruston District —
Ansley UMC — Rev. Carolyn P. Volentine
Arcadia UMC — Rev. Douglas Degraffenried
Crossroads UMC — Rev. Cleburne W. Quaid
Bernice UMC — Rev. Cage M. McLemore
Beech Grove UMC — Rev. Cage M. McLemore
Calhoun UMC — Rev. Rupert H. Pickett
Beulah UMC — Rev. Rubert H. Pickett
Choudrant UMC — Rev. Raymond M. Crofoot
Clay UMC — Rev. Troy Garrett
Downsville UMC — Rev. Stephen R. Williamson
Bethel UMC — Rev. Stephen R. Williamson
Mt. Nebo UMC — Rev. Stephen R. Williamson
Doyline UMC — Rev. Kibbie E. Hatfield
Sibley UMC — Rev. Kibbie E. Hatfield
Dubach UMC — Rev. Merlin W. Merrill
Farmerville UMC — Rev. Larry D. O'Dell
Gibsland UMC — Rev. William A. Moon III
Oak Grove UMC — Rev. William A. Moon III
Harmony Chapel UMC — Rev. Alton L. Peel
Arizona UMC — Rev. Alton L. Peel
Haynesville UMC — Rev. Byrd L. Terry
Shongaloo UMC — Rev. Byrd L. Terry
Brushwood UMC — Rev. Judith D. Bazer
Dodson UMC — Rev. Randall B. Scrivener
New Hope UMC — Rev. Randall B. Scrivener
First UMC, Homer — Rev. Terry C. Willis
Wesley Chapel UMC — Rev. Terry C. Willis
Jonesboro UMC — Rev. George A. McVay
Marion UMC — Rev. Bryant E. Gore
Birds Chapel UMC — Rev. Bryant E. Gore
First UMC, Minden — Rev. Carl E. Rhoads III
Lakeview UMC — Rev. J. Thomas Logan
Concord UMC — Rev. Robert E. Townsend
Bethlehem UMC — Rev. Joseph H. Windham
Ringgold UMC — Rev. Steven J. Porter
Castor UMC — Rev. Steven J. Porter
Trinity UMC, Ruston — Rev. George A. Duerson
Grace UMC, Ruston — Rev. Larry G. Miller
Simsboro UMC — Rev. Lloyd E. Scott
Salem UMC — Rev. Lloyd E. Scott
Springhill UMC — Rev. Terral T. Lowe
Sarepta UMC — Rev. Terral T. Lowe
Wesley Chapel UMC — Rev. James O. Evans
Lisbon UMC — Rev. John R. Oldham
McIntyre UMC — Rev. William Jack Maxey
Colquitt UMC — Rev. Joe E. Hunter
Evergreen UMC — Rev. Joe E. Hunter
Eros UMC — C/O Mrs. Lorie Barnett
Indian Village UMC — Rev. Rupert H. Pickett
Antioch UMC — C/O Mrs. Betty Rogers
Pilgrims Rest UMC — Rev. Jules E. Colvin

Shreveport District —
Benton UMC — Rev. Robert A. Weber
Blanchard UMC — Rev. Ellen B. Montegudo
Barksdale UMC — Rev. Paul D. Davis
First UMC, Bossier City — Dr. John M. Lee
Asbury UMC — Rev. Jerry G. Hilbun
Wesley Chapel UMC — Rev. Robert I. Galatas
Crossroads UMC — Rev. William V. Sirman
Greenwood UMC — Rev. J. Van Dickens III
Bethany UMC — Rev. J. Van Dickens III
Ida UMC — Rev. Robert E. Carter
Hosston UMC — Rev. Douglas E. Milliron
Gilliam UMC — Rev. Douglas E. Milliron
St. Matthew UMC — Cora Howard, Treasurer
Pleasant Valley UMC — Ms. Ruth Pegues, Treas.
Bonchest UMC — Grant Sudds, Treasurer
Fairview UMC — Mr. Earl Lacour, Treasurer
Shiloh UMC — Mrs. Rosemary Heald, Treas.
McDonald UMC — Rev. Jarrell Morgan
Bethel UMC — Rev. Glynn L. Foreman
Rosa UMC — Rev. Mikel Wiley
New Light UMC
Love Chapel UMC — Rev. John H. Lavo
Haughton UMC — Rev. John H. Lavo
First UMC, Mansfield — Rev. Richard H. Humphries
Grand Cane UMC — Rev. Richard H. Humphries
Wesley UMC, Mansfield — Rev. S. Charles Byrd
Shady Grove UMC — Rev. S. Charles Byrd
Many UMC — Rev. Larry D. Norman
Bayou Scie UMC — Rev. Larry D. Norman
Mooringsport UMC — Rev. Fred B. Moore
Oil City UMC — Rev. Fred B. Moore
Plain Dealing UMC — Rev. Jack S. Winegeart
Pleasant Hill UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser
Mitchell UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser
Pelican UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser
Vivian UMC — Dr. Burton F. Blair
Zwolle UMC — Rev. Richard O. Teeter
Converse UMC — Rev. Richard O. Teeter
Noble UMC — Rev. Richard O. Teeter
Broadmoor UMC — Rev. W. Dwight Ramsey
Christ UMC — Rev. C. Gerald Richardson
Fairfield UMC — Rev. Willie E. Jackson Jr.
First UMC, Shreveport — Dr. John Fellers
Jewella UMC — Rev. Oscar Tippin Jr.
Lakeview UMC — Rev. Douglas L. Cain
Morningside UMC — Rev. E. Benjamin Fant
Noel Memorial UMC — Rev. T. Nichols Evans Jr.
Ellerbe Road UMC — Rev. James A. Va Hook
St. James UMC — Rev. Arnold V. Brown
Round Grove UMC — Rev. Arnold V. Brown
St. Lukes UMC — Rev. A. Wayne Evans
St. Paul UMC, Shreveport — Rev. George L. Thomas
Jobnson Chapel UMC — Rev. George L. Thomas
Belcher UMC — Rev. Kathy A. Clark-Dickens
Bradford Chapel UMC — Rev. Lee C. Jennings
Rodessa UMC — Rev. Linda Shepherd

Special Recognition

The following churches have paid 100% on all apportionments, plus payments on General Advance Specials, Conference Advance Specials, and General Church offerings

Lake Charles District —
Church Point UMC — Rev. Tracy L. MacKenzie
First UMC, DeQuincy — Rev. Tom O. Crosby Jr.
Iota UMC — Rev. John W. Guyre
AA Bernard Mem/Hayes UMC — Rev. Mark B. Benge Sr.
University UMC, LK Chas — Rev. Lael S. Jones
First UMC, Leesville — Rev. Lewis L. Olmsted
Oakdale UMC — Rev. Louis M. Coppage, Jr.
Pine Prairie UMC — Rev. Louis M. Coppage, Jr.
Roanoke UMC — Rev. Leon A. Boggs
Henning Mem UMC — Dr. Donald J. Hall

Baton Rouge District —
Blackwater UMC — Rev. R. Larry Stafford
Broadmoor UMC — Dr. Charles B. Simmons
First UMC, Baton Rouge — Rev. Christopher H. Andrews
Jefferson UMC — Rev. William E. Nolan
Beech Grove UMC — Rev. Willie Laws
St. Francisville UMC — Rev. Harold Babin
Bluff Creek UMC — Rev. Darwin Brecheen
Evangeline UMC — Rev. Carol Susan Winn

New Orleans District —
First UMC, Gretna — Rev. Bob L. Lawton
Lutcher Chapel UMC — Rev. William L. Jones
St. Landry UMC — Rev. William L. Jones
Munholland UMC — Rev. Robert L. Potter
St. Matthews UMC — Rev. William I. Eubanks
Felicity UMC — Rev. Marva L. Mitcbell
St. Luke's UMC — Rev. James F. Comer

Ruston District —
Doyline UMC — Rev. Kibbie E. Hatfield
Sibley UMC — Rev. Kibbie E. Hatfield
Farmerville UMC — Rev. Larry D. O'Dell
Grace UMC, Ruston — Rev. Larry G. Miller
Wesley Chapel UMC — Rev. James O. Evans

Acadiana District —
First, UMC, Franklin — Rev. J. Vernon Fairley
Asbury UMC, Lafayette — Dr. Stone W. Caraway
Louisiana Mem UMC — Rev. James H. Humphreys
Magnolia UMC — Rev. Louis Augustine Jr.

Alexandria District —
First UMC, Boyce — Rev. Joe A. Hoover
Asbury UMC, Natchitoches — Rev. James A. Graham
Williams Chapel UMC — Rev. James A. Graham
St. Marks UMC — Rev. Andrew Jones

Shreveport District —
Hosston UMC — Rev. Douglas E. Milliron
Pleasant Hill UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser
Mitchell UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser
Pelican UMC — Rev. Roy Mouser

North Shore District —
Amite UMC — Rev. Kenneth W. Irby
First UMC, Denham Springs — Rev. Steven M. Spurlock
Hartzell Mt. Zion UMC — Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell

Monroe District —
First UMC, LK Providence — Rev. John M. Downs
First UMC, Monroe — Dr. William C. Blakely
First UMC, W. Monroe — Rev. William D. Peeples

Louisiana Conference 1990 Stewardship Report

District	Church Apportionment	Paid All Funds	% Paid Apportionments
Ruston	420,502.00	502,187.42	96.98%
North Shore	472,970.00	520,873.00	95.87%
Alexandria	387,415.00	419,595.97	93.78%
Shreveport	935,385.00	973,744.08	93.66%
Lake Charles	518,699.00	568,927.52	93.08%
Baton Rouge	797,425.00	924,320.53	91.79%
Monroe	551,548.00	572,206.10	88.86%
Acadiana	443,211.00	421,882.07	79.25%
New Orleans	740,718.00	670,243.90	77.47%
LA Conference	5,267,873.00	5,573,980.59	89.80%

Editorials

War in Middle East: Struggling anew with old dilemma

The Persian Gulf war poses anew a dilemma with which Christians have struggled for two millennia:

Given our commitment to One who calls His followers to be peacemakers, how should we relate to the reality of war?

Christian tradition offers valuable insights that we should use as we assess the current situation.

Church historian Roland Bainton cites three basic attitudes Christians have developed toward war.

■ **The crusade approach.** This approach, which takes its name from wars to control the Holy Land during the Middle Ages, affirms war as a positive means for good to triumph over evil. Elements of a crusade approach are observable on all sides in the current conflict.

A blatant example is the rhetoric of Saddam Hussein calling President Bush a "satan" who must be destroyed. But gleeful expressions of desire to rid the world of this modern "Hitler" reflect a similar attitude.

■ **The pacifist approach.** A small but influential minority of Christians through the ages have insisted that war is never a moral option. "Peace churches" such as the Mennonites and modern organizations like the Fellowship of Reconciliation have helped to keep the pacifist tradition alive.

Pacifism is as unambiguous in opposing war, regardless of the situation, as the crusade approach is to affirming it. Its absolute, uncompromising clarity in following Jesus' teachings is appealing. While the church should always affirm pacifism as a valid witness for individuals, most consider it impractical as a basis for national policy.

Even on an individual basis pacifism often is criticized for setting aside other aspects of Jesus' law of love. For example, refusing responsibility for the use of force severely limits how one can respond compassionately to the oppression of weak nations by stronger nations.

■ **The "just-war" approach.** Unlike the crusade and pacifist approaches to war, this one is cloaked in moral ambiguity. It views war as inherently evil but recognizes situations in which a greater evil may justify, or even mandate, participation in war (see box).

A "just-war" doctrine attempts to assess the morality of both the ends and means of a given conflict, and thereby to limit its scope and wreckage of human life and property.

A "just-war" approach does not guarantee either the morality of a particular war's aims or its conduct. Differences in the way a situation may be evaluated virtually guarantee divergent views regarding whether it is "just" by equally sincere and well-informed Christians.

Whether consciously recognized and labeled or not, most Christians view war from some variation of the "just war" doctrine rather than as pacifists or crusaders.

We're encouraged that both the United Nations and President Bush have shown respect for "just-war" criteria in deciding on the use of force to drive Iraq out of Kuwait.

We likewise are grateful for the degree to which "just war" criteria, such as avoiding civilian targets, are being followed in the war's conduct by the United Nations-backed coalition.

From a "just-war" perspective, we believe our nation's leaders have chosen a morally defensible course of action when weighed alongside other options.

But we are not engaged in a "holy war" and we must maintain vigilant scrutiny of our motives and actions lest we slip into a crusade.

We should work and pray to see that this war ends as quickly as possible. And we should respect, even if we do not agree with, those who question the aims and/or the timing of our involvement.

What is a "just war"?

The "just-war" approach to conflict traces its origins to St. Augustine (354-430). Christians across the centuries have formulated numerous versions of the "just-war theory." Following are its basic elements as presented by church historian Roland Bainton and others (see, for example, the Nov. 16 "Here I Stand" column by Stephen J. Sidorak Jr.).

■ **A legitimate authority must declare war.**

■ **The cause for the war must be just.**

■ **Intentions motivating a declaration of war must be right.**

■ **There must be probability of success.**

■ **The war must be directed against unjust aggressors, not against innocent people.**

■ **The good achieved by war must outweigh its harm.**

A tragedy within a tragedy

A largely overlooked dimension of the Persian Gulf conflict merits immediate response by Christians.

Vast numbers of people, mostly Iraqis and Kuwaitis, have been or will be forced by events in the region to flee their homes. So far, military and political issues have overshadowed their exodus.

For example, some 75,000 refugees in Jordan are surviving on meager rations in makeshift camps, according to officials of Church World Service and Witness, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches (see related story elsewhere in this issue).

Relief officials predict that the military conflict, no matter how long it lasts, will displace at least another 1 million people.

Christians should take an active lead in addressing this particular tragedy within the wider tragedy of war.

The need itself is not new. Refugees are one of the hidden costs of most international conflicts. Each major war of this century has added many refugees to the pool of human suffering.

Besides being hungry and homeless, those forced to flee the havoc of conflict—military, political and economic—typically lose everything they own. To compound their burden, they usually are denied the legal remedies we take for granted. They are at the mercy of whomever agrees to take them in.

Refugees are an unusually pertinent example of "the least of these" for whom Jesus called His followers to show compassion.

Differing perspectives about how to overcome the menace posed by Saddam Hussein should not paralyze us from caring for the most vulnerable victims of his aggression.

Via the Middle East Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies worldwide, our sister and brother Christians are appealing for aid to help such victims.

We should respond generously. Make donations through your local church treasurer to: The United Methodist Committee on Relief for "Persian Gulf Refugees," Advance No. 982450.

MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES PHOTO

Vast numbers of refugees such as these, mostly Iraqis and Kuwaitis, have been or will be forced by events in the Middle East to flee their homes. So far, military and political issues have overshadowed their exodus.

My Witness

My students' letters give soldiers a glimpse of God

By JOAN GASPARD

"Hush, I pray you! What if this friend happens to be—God!"

Robert Browning's words eloquently remind us that often we can draw near to God through our friends and others who are available to us in everyday life.

Chad and Joel are young soldiers whom I have known since they were small children. They are men now in a far-away desert facing the unknown of war.

They are in a strange land with a strange culture, language, and religion. Their letters often reveal that they feel they are in uncharted waters with no compass and no helmsman at the wheel.

My students, who are homebound and hospitalized with life-threatening illnesses, have grown to know Chad and Joel through my sharing.

Some of these students recently wrote letters to Chad and Joel. Perhaps the seriousness, the urgency, or the realization that our country is in crisis prompted them to share their words of hope, of friendship, and love at this particular time.

I know that these letters will give my friends in Saudi Arabia the same sense of love and hope that they have given me in this difficult time in their lives and ours.

Hi, Chad and Joel:

My name is Erica and I'm in the ninth grade. I am on homebound this year because I have been having trouble with my disease.

I have a disease called Lupus which infects my auto-immune system. It's not contagious but it is very hard to keep under control.

Many times I feel as if I'm losing control in a battle that I'm not sure I can win. I wish you well and hope you don't have to go to war and fight such battles.

Your friend, Erica

Dear Chad and Joel,

I am 15 years of age and understand the situation. I know this experience isn't a good one and that we as people must do the right thing.

I don't like it but know there is a job to be done and we are certainly going to do it, whatever that may be. I am supportive of you and others.

My prayers are with you. I will be thinking of you in this time of tragedy. I wish you well and God's blessings.

Darian

Dear Chad and Joel:

Hi! My name is Jennifer and I'm a homebound student of Ms. Gaspard. She told me about your situation and I want you to know that I'm really praying for you!

I hope everything is worked out really soon. I just got over cancer and I have faith that everything happens for a reason and everything works out the way it's suppose to work out.

We all really appreciate the hard work and patience you have had overseas and we want you to come back soon!

Love, Jennifer

"Hush, I pray you! What if this friend happens to be—God!"

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Joan Gaspard lives in Hurst, Texas and is a member of First United Methodist in Fort Worth (Central Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

FaithLine

What do you believe is the 'core issue' in Mid-east crisis?

Elsewhere in this issue, Christian ethicists, theologians and church leaders tell what they believe is the "core issue" for Christians regarding the war in the Middle East.

How would you have responded if a Reporter staff member had telephoned and asked you to state what you, as a Christian, believe the "core issue" in that crisis to be?

You can tell us your answer by leaving a one-minute recorded message on the Reporter's FaithLine answering machine. A sampling of reponses will be published in an upcoming issue. Call (214) 630-6499 by no later than midnight, Jan. 29.

Letters to the Editor

Cruzan editorial overlooked critical factor

The Jan. 4 editorial on the tragic case of Nancy Cruzan overlooked the most critical factor: the "treatment" and "technology" mentioned were the intravenous provision of food and water.

Nancy Cruzan died from starvation/dehydration. Obviously, her case and other similar cases are tragic. I agree that it is unfair to attack the motives of her parents since they had to deal with a very agonizing situation and deserve compassion.

But it is quite another matter to accept or even encourage death by starvation as a matter of public or church policy even in the most tragic cases.

First it was Karen Quinlan, where the issue was life sustained artificially by machines. Now we have crossed the line and are actively advocating starving patients to death. What is the next step?

"Death with dignity" is a loaded phrase. As with so many other contemporary social issues, the church mirrors secular trends.

Simplistic as it may sound to some, instead of asking what General Conference, the General Board of Church and Society, and maybe even certain legal scholars would have us do, at some point we need to pray and ask what our Lord would have us do.

Kent Cooper
Deming, New Mexico

Chart showed poor taste

I have great admiration and respect for education and the educated.

But I thought your Jan. 11 chart showing the percentage of college graduates among UM clergy, UM laypeople and population of the United States carried erroneous implications and was in poor taste.

In my opinion, such a chart might be okay for any other publication except a United Methodist one.

B. W. Dickie
Woodson, Texas

We aren't paranoid

A Jan. 4 letter stated, "It seems like we may be expanding a real problem into paranoia." This was in reference to a Nov. 30 article about sexual harassment in the church.

My impression from the letter was that the writer feels women are overly sensitive to subtle forms of sexual harassment such as "unwanted looks" or "touch."

Women are not overly sensitive to these things. We are justifiably and experientially sensitized to them. For many of us, these subtle forms of sexual harassment have come from the same men who have later raped us.

For many of us, these forms of sexual harassment were the clues we learned as children from the same men who took advantage of our naivete and sexually abused us before we knew what sex was.

We have every reason to be paranoid.

Lisa M. Wolfe
Boulder, Colorado

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, must be original and must carry the signature and address of the author.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Welcome to new readers in Golden, Co.

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 350 member-families of **First United Methodist Church in Golden, Co.** (Rocky Mountain Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Houston, Jasper and Decatur, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Proverbs 9:10)

Readings for week of Jan. 28

Monday: Psalms 59
Tuesday: Psalms 61:1-5
Wednesday: Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Thursday: Mark 1:1-13
Friday: Mark 1:14-20
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

What others are saying

"God works through imagination. What we cannot imagine we cannot do. A congregation that cannot imagine committed and vigorous ministry to the larger community will never offer it. What is desperately needed throughout the faith community and our whole society is a healing of the imagination. We must not batter our creative people and our own imaginative function out of timidity and fear."

—The Rev. Carmen Pak, United Methodist pastor, La Verne, Calif.

* * *

"It may be that as church leaders we have wanted to protect our parishioners from the evils of this world. We would rather prepare for Super Bowl parties and the next board meeting. We want to classify the war as someone else's problem. Yet the parishioners are leaving for Saudi Arabia... They are asking whether we ought to be in the middle of this. They want to hear from God. They want to talk to God. They want to know that God is paying attention. What are we going to tell them? Silence is not always the best policy."

—Stephen L. Cox, editor, The Missouri East edition, The United Methodist Review

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Faith watch

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Peace Award presented

WASHINGTON—Accepting the 1990 World Methodist Peace medallion on behalf of Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev is Sergey B. Chetverikov (center), Minister-Counselor of the Soviet embassy. Presenting the award are the Rev. Joe Hale (left), chief executive of the World Methodist Council, and United Methodist Bishop Benjamin R. Oliphint (Houston Area), a member of the council's executive committee. The citation for Mr. Gorbachev cited steps to "free religious bodies in the U.S.S.R. from laws restricting the free exercise of their faith and depriving churches of land and property." However, said Dr. Hale later, "The Soviet crackdown in Lithuania violates the award and must be condemned."

REPORT FROM BAGHDAD: A United Methodist minister who was in Baghdad two days before war broke out returned with three observations. The Rev. Ken Bedell of United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, told a news conference in Dayton he saw clear evidence that (1) sanctions imposed by the United Nations "are having an effect"; (2) the people of Iraq do not want a war, but (3) the Iraqi people and leadership "are ready to defend themselves and to pay any price to defeat American military action." Mr. Bedell went to the Middle East with 11 other American students and professors sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The organization advocates nonviolent alternatives to armed conflict.

NO ADDED SECURITY: The United Methodist Building at 100 Maryland Ave. N.E. in Washington is not among public buildings increasing security in protection against possible terrorist attacks. The Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett, top executive of the General Board of Church and Society which is the primary occupant of the building, said the decision not to strengthen normal security procedures is based on faith. The building's Simpson Chapel has been offered to members of Congress and Supreme Court justices, their staffs, and others as a place for prayers for peace. The United Methodist Building is adjacent to the Supreme Court, U.S. Capitol and Senator's offices.

BOTH BLAMED: In a statement Jan. 17 deploring initiation of hostilities in the Persian Gulf, the Rev. Emilio Castro, chief executive of the World Council of Churches, called to task both the United States for starting the attack and Iraq for failing to respond to numerous peace efforts. The WCC has appealed for an immediate cease-fire and peace negotiations, for pastoral response to all victims of the war, and for all nations involved not to use any chemical, biological or nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

Emilio Castro

MISSIONARIES' HOME HIT: The Protestant Church compound in Algiers, Algeria, home of two United Methodist missionary couples, was attacked twice by students who broke windows and battered doors Jan. 17. The students were protesting the role of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf war, said Mary Sue Robinson, an Africa-area executive of the church's General Board of Global Ministries. Ms. Robinson, herself a former missionary in Algeria, contacted all nine United Methodist missionaries in Algeria and Tunisia and reported "all are well and calm but quite shaken."

GAS MASKS LACKING: The Rev. Romeo L. Del Rosario—the lone United Methodist missionary in Israel—reported a dangerous shortage of gas masks last week for the Palestinian population of the occupied territories. He told the church's General Board of Global Ministries that there are only 173,000 masks for 1.65 million people. Dr. Del Rosario also said there is no siren system in the West Bank or Gaza strip. He works in East Jerusalem through offices of the Episcopal Church.

Compiled from news and staff reports

What's issue for Christians in Mideast war?

Ethicists, theologians, leaders differ in perspective, but all say it's a time for reflection

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

What is the core issue for Christians regarding the Persian Gulf war?

Last week, as war broke out between a U.S.-led coalition and Iraq, the Reporter put that question to several leading United Methodist seminarians and leaders in national and world affairs.

Here are excerpts from their responses:

The Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, professor of Christian social ethics, Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington: "I am increasingly feeling that the bottom line regarding the invasion of Kuwait is the question of world order. Can the world community provide collective security for the whole world so that small countries don't have to fear large countries? Questions of justice hinge on relationships—between nations as well as people—that aren't dependent upon physical strength. I concur with President Bush: Saddam Hussein had to get out of Kuwait."

J. Philip Wogaman

The Rev. Rebecca A. Parker, president of Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, Calif.: "The core issue to me is to understand and be faithful to what Jesus meant when he said, 'Love your enemies.' I've been thinking a lot lately about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s lifelong intellectual search for how Christians can respond to the presence of evil in the world and still be faithful to God. We're squandering our creativity and imagination on war instead of peacemaking."

The Rev. Joseph E. Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and pastor of Cascade United Methodist Church in Atlanta: "We are selectively patient. We were patient with South Africa and waited and waited on sanctions to work, and they did. We were patient when Russia invaded Afghanistan. We were impatient with Japanese-Americans but patient with Italian-Americans and German-Americans in World War II. Does this introduce racism into a militaristic exercise? Militarism is often the hammer which drives the nail of racism into the coffin of economic exploitation."

Joseph E. Lowery

The Rev. Robert W. Edgar, president, Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, Calif.: "The core issue for Christians is whether war is a moral tool that can be used as we approach the 21st Century or whether we should look to other means of conflict resolution. I thought the congressional debates were thoughtful and respectful of one another's position, but they should have come a month or two months ago, when the issue could have been whether to go to war, not whether one supports the president."

Robert W. Edgar

The Rev. Tex Sample, professor of ethics, St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Mo.: "The fundamental issue for Christians is to remain faithful to Christ at this time. We must make sure that faithfulness to Christ is more important than buying into the perceived self-interest of our nation—or any nation. Those who believe in 'just war' must be careful to be very faithful to that tradition. Those who are pacifists must articulate their beliefs very clearly. We must be very critical of the U.S. motivation in this war and not turn it into a 'holy war.' It's not holy."

Tex Sample

Dr. Jane I. Smith, academic dean and professor of history of religions at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo.: "I think there are actually several issues Christians need to consider around the general concerns of war-and-violence and the alternatives. Christians need to see if we can be more helpful in aiding our government in pursuing those alternatives. It's important for the government leaders to know very early, before escalation, that many Christians prefer that we pursue the alternatives rather than war."

The Rev. Joe Hale, chief executive of the World Methodist Council based in Lake Junaluska, N.C.: "I believe the 'peacemakers' of the world have the ultimate power, for they are able to neutralize hostility, to reduce conflict, to open closed doors and to bring down walls. It will be followers of the Prince of Peace, along with other people of goodwill, who must pick up the pieces and rebuild shattered human relationships when the bombs have all fallen and the liberation of Kuwait is accomplished. This human reconciliation is the only hope for any enduring peace."

Joe Hale

Associate Editors Diane Huie Balay, Don Donato, Denise Johnson Stovall and Stephen L. Swecker contributed to this report.

Personal cares bring war home

For some of those interviewed, the Persian Gulf war has personal implications.

The Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, ethics professor at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, is the father of Marine Capt. Donald Wogaman.

Dr. Wogaman said his son was "on the first plane" into Saudi Arabia last August when Iraq invaded Kuwait and is active now in Operation Desert Storm.

The Rev. Robert W. Edgar, president of Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, Calif., is a former U.S. Representative from Pennsylvania. He told the Reporter that viewing televised congressional debates about the war marked "the first time I've missed being in Congress."

"I wished I could have been part of the debates," he said. "I would have voted very differently from my successor."

The Rev. Rebecca A. Parker of Berkeley, Calif., a United Methodist clergywoman, is the first woman president of a U.S. seminary. She has been president of a Unitarian school, Starr King School for the Ministry, since August.

Dr. Parker said she found herself consoling a campus where the mood was one of "sadness, great grief" at war's outbreak.

"The same is true throughout the Graduate Theological Union (a cooperative group of seven theological schools) here at Berkeley," she said.

Dr. Jane I. Smith, a member of the United Church of Christ, is vice president and dean of academic affairs and professor of history of religions at United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo.

She said the war has pointed out to her that seminaries "need to take a more active stand than they have; helping not only students but the community and the government in evaluating what is a Christian, or simply moral, position on what is important."

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

First casualty of Persian Gulf conflict is active UM layman

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

The first U.S. casualty of the Persian Gulf war, Lt. Cmdr. Michael Scott Speicher, was a Sunday School teacher and softball team member at Lake Shore United Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Fla.

Cmdr. Speicher, 33, was married and the father of two children, Mike, 1, and Megan, 3.

According to the Jan. 18 "Washington Post," the Pentagon said Cmdr. Speicher had been killed in action but "his commanding officer aboard the USS Saratoga made the decision to classify him as missing in action."

Early reports said the pilot died the first night of the attack, when he was shot down in his FA18 Hornet, a single-seat fighter-bomber.

Cmdr. Speicher's plane was shot down by an Iraqi surface-to-air missile over Iraqi territory.

"Scott never missed church when he was home," said the Rev. Paul J. Dickinson, pastor of the 1,100-member Lake Shore Church, eight miles from Cecil Field where the pilot was based.

The congregation had an all-night prayer vigil Jan. 18.

"It was a special time of prayer, not only for Scott, but for at least 30 people in our congregation stationed in the Gulf region," Mr. Dickinson added.

Mr. Dickinson baptized the Speichers in 1986 and, later, both children.

The pilot was a graduate of Forest High School in Jacksonville and Florida State University in Tallahassee.

"Scott was an extremely committed Christian young man," Mr. Dickinson continued.

"He was an active church member and a faithful and committed husband and father. He loved his country; he loved to fly; he loved being part of the U.S. Navy."

Cmdr. Speicher taught a preschool Sunday school class.

"He loved little children and they loved him," Mr. Dickinson said.

"That is the kind of guy he was," Mr. Dickinson continued. "With his military rank, he could have been high and mighty but he was humble, genuine and sincere."

Greg Meibeyer, who has been in a Sunday school class at Lake Shore with the Speichers, called the pilot an "outstanding father and Christian man who loved the Navy.

"Just last year I talked with Scott about his career in the Navy and asked if he ever planned to get out and he said no," Mr. Meibeyer recalled.

"I talked last night with Joanne and we both agreed that he died doing what he loved. He had a real sweet spirit. I really liked that about him."

United Methodist Bishop H. Hasbrouck Hughes Jr. of Lakeland, Fla., said the reports about Cmdr. Speicher had brought the war home quickly to the United Methodist community in the area.

"The news has brought great distress to all of us," he said.

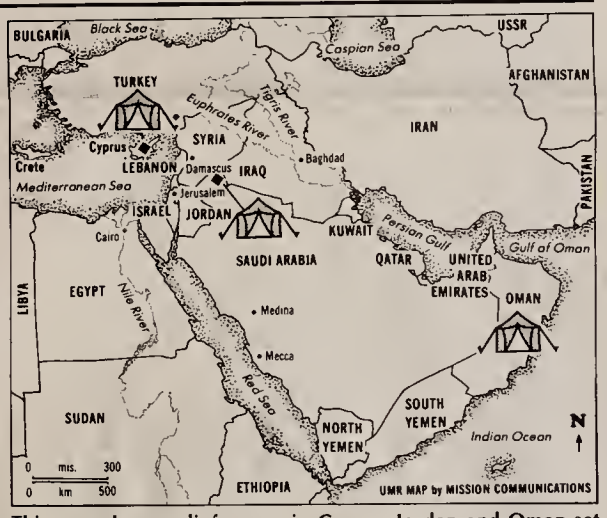
Protestant, Orthodox leaders sign 10-point response to war

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Leaders of 32 U.S. Protestant and Orthodox denominations in the National Council of Churches of Christ last week endorsed guidelines for an interchurch response to the Middle East war.

The 10-point "Common Basic Ecumenical Stance in the Event of War" calls on American Christians to:

- Pray for a speedy end to the conflict;
- Call for an immediate cease-fire and the initiation of negotiations under United Nations auspices to seek a just, equitable, peaceful solution as rapidly as possible.
- Express pastoral concern for those at risk—civilian and military, Middle Eastern and those from other countries—for the leaders of the nations involved, and for the leadership of the United Nations.
- Seek to limit both the scope and the intensity of the conflict.
- Appeal to all nations involved not to use weapons of mass destruction such as chemical, biological and nuclear weapons;
- Urge all parties to abide strictly by international humanitarian law, often referred to as the "Geneva Conventions," to guarantee strict application of international standards for the protection of refugees;
- Call upon neighboring countries to the conflict to open their borders to allow refugees to reach a safe haven, and call upon all nations, especially those of the industrialized world, to receive refugees and assist them in their time of need.
- Seek to provide humanitarian aid to displaced persons and other victims, without distinction, in cooperation with the Middle East Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, other church-related agencies, relevant United Nations and other international non-governmental agencies (such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies).
- Resist threats to the civil liberties and well-being of Arab-Americans and residents of Arab descent, background or appearance, or people who profess the faith of Islam, as well as to Jews in our society at risk of discrimination and anti-Semitism as emotions around the conflict rise.
- Renew commitments to interfaith dialogue and cooperation as a means of bringing the full resources of the religious community to bear on the search for an end to the war and a peaceful solution to the conflict.



This map shows relief camps in Cyprus, Jordan and Oman set up by the Middle East Council of Churches to aid refugees fleeing the Persian Gulf war.

Church relief agencies 'braced for the worst'

By PATRICIA LEFEVERE

NEW YORK—The Middle East Council of Churches has established command posts in Cyprus, Oman and Jordan to deal with a flood of refugees from Iraq and Kuwait.

The Middle East council has been coordinating refugee aid since the crisis erupted last August.

Its efforts have been aided by contributions from American Christians to Church World Service and Witness, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., as well as other church and non-governmental entities such as the International Red Cross.

Within hours after the war began, Church World Service and Witness received a request for blankets, said Lani J. Havens, director.

Because of the "extraordinary cost" of air-freighting blankets from the U.S., efforts were under way to purchase them and other goods from nations closer to the refugee zones, Dr. Havens said.

"We are mobilizing what can be mobilized in the region," she said. "The chief need is for food—especially milk—blankets and medical supplies."

Dr. Havens added that Church World Service and Witness is "braced for the worst" and is trying to determine the scale and cost of what will be needed.

"We are mobilizing what can be mobilized. The chief need is for food—especially milk—blankets and medical supplies."
—Lani Havens

A logistics team has been set up by the National Council of Churches' Mideast Office. The team includes a disaster response, refugee and material resources.

A strategic plan also is being drawn for dealing with requests as they are received, Dr. Havens said.

Thousands of Iraqi refugees poured across the Jordanian border in the first two days of the war, said Gabriel Habib, chief executive of the Middle East Council of Churches.

At least 1 million refugees have already fled Iraq and Kuwait. As many as 2.2 more are expected.

The council has asked Syria, Saudi Arabia and Turkey to open their borders to those fleeing the conflict.

Patricia Lefevere is a free-lance writer in Tenafly, N.J.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

RELIEF HEAD RESIGNS: Norma Kehrberg, chief executive of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) since 1983, has resigned effective Feb. 15. She will become a senior consultant for the United Mission to Nepal, an organization of 35 churches and agencies. Dr. Kehrberg previously worked as a UM missionary in Nepal and had been seeking a new mission assignment through the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

Norma Kehrberg

FOUNDATION CHIEF: United Methodist layman Don L. Riggin has been named president and chief executive officer of the Arthritis Foundation, based in Atlanta. Mr. Riggin has served with the foundation in various capacities for 25 years.

HEADS SEMINARY GROUP: The Rev. Donald E. Messer, president of UM-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver, has been elected president of the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools. The association works with administrators and faculties of the 13 United Methodist seminaries in the U.S. to promote cooperation, sharing experience and mutual interests of theological education.

Donald Messer

'EAGLE' AWARDED: Epworth Children's Home in St. Louis, a United Methodist-related residential treatment center for neglected and severely troubled youth, has received its second Educational Assessment Guidelines Leading to Excellence (EAGLE) Award. The award from the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries was given at the recent meeting of the EAGLE Committee. Epworth Home also operates a family services center.

RIGHTS BACKED: A call for "full inclusion and full rights for lesbians and gay men in the United Methodist Church and society" is being made by the 30-member governing board of the Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial network of United Methodists. The board recently adopted that and other points of a platform for action at the 1992 General Conference, top legislative body of the church.

LOCATION DEPLORED: The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial network of United Methodists, has directed a resolution to the World Methodist Council deploring that council's decision to meet in July in Singapore. The social-action group also asked that the world body take a strong position criticizing the Singapore government for actions against the Asian Christian Conference, a group which had charged the government with human rights violations.

Seminary president tells of narrow escape

By CONNIE NELSON-DANIEL

Holding his infant son for the first time was something the Rev. Daniel Brewer feared he might never live to do.

The president of United Methodist-related Gbarnga School of Theology in Liberia and two daughters narrowly escaped his war-torn homeland in early December and was reunited in Minneapolis Dec. 27 with his wife and son, ending a nine-month ordeal as a refugee in his own country.

The reunion with his wife, Rose, and son, Robert—born June 28—was "overwhelming," Dr. Brewer said.

'Answer to prayer'

"It was an answer to prayer," he said in a telephone interview.

"When the official death squad of the Liberian government ordered my execution Aug. 15, the first thing I thought about was that I have a young child and I would never see him."

Mrs. Brewer fled Liberia last May as the civil war intensified and sought safety with two nieces in Brooklyn Center, a Minneapolis suburb.

Dr. Brewer remained in Liberia, along with the couple's youngest daughters Yeamah, 5, and Lauretta, 16, who were safe with family members.

Dr. Brewer became trapped in the capital city of Monrovia May 25 when rebel forces ransacked Gbarnga School of Theology. He was in Monrovia to plan the 1990 Liberian Annual Conference with Bishop Arthur F. Kulah.

The Brewer family's belongings, as well as seminary property, were destroyed by the rebels.

He joined other refugees in the United Methodist missionary compound for several months, then later—one week after the massacre of an estimated 700 Liberian civilians—moved to the nearby Lutheran compound.

"You'd get up in the morning, live all day with the threat of death, expecting any one of the three rival groups to appear," said Dr. Brewer. "You didn't know what questions or demands they would make upon you, whether you would be able to satisfy their demands.

"If any individual soldier came, he was the soldier, inquisitor, judge and executioner, all in one. In five seconds, your life could be snuffed out by just one person."

Conditions in Liberia were "agonizing," Dr. Brewer said.

With travel severely restricted—all civilian vehicles were confiscated by soldiers, and military checkpoints were established on all major roads—Dr. Brewer was unable to return to Gbarnga until Sept. 18.

His nine-month ordeal came to an end Dec. 9, when, reunited with his young daughters, he was allowed passage to the Ivory Coast by Liberian immigration officials.

Two children missing

Although his wife and three of their children are safe, Dr. Brewer said his two oldest children are still missing. A son, 21, and a daughter, 20, are believed to have escaped Liberia.

In spite of desperate conditions in Liberia, Christians there were sustained by their faith, Dr. Brewer said.

"Their faith was very strong. People just drew closer and closer to the Lord."

Dr. Brewer believes that his life was spared because "God just intervened in time."

He said his deliverance from death has strengthened his commitment to service.

Ms. Nelson-Daniel is editor of the Northwest Texas Annual Conference edition of the Reporter.

Reunited again are, from left, Lauretta, holding little brother Robert, Mrs. Yeamah Brewer, Rosaline Brewer and the Rev. Daniel Brewer. The Brewers' two adult children are still missing.

'Quiet revolution' creeping up on U.S., church

Speaker says by year 2000, older adults 'will take control'

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

FORT WORTH, Texas—An unstoppable "quiet revolution" with "no guns fired" is creeping up on us.

So says Elizabeth Welch, 85-year-old writer, speaker and resource leader on aging issues.

By the year 2000, she said, "millions and millions of older adults will take control."

Dr. Welch made those remarks in her keynote address to 180 leaders of United Methodist older adult ministries at a national convocation in mid-January in Fort Worth.

When the "baby boomer" generation moves into older adulthood in the next 20 years, Dr. Welch continued, their political power will be so great it could be called "gerontacracy."

The impact on the church will be enormous, she added.

"Older people will make the decisions that will affect our entire future," she said.

Far from seeing this as a problem, Dr. Welch predicts that the aging population will provide the church with a great reservoir of talent and experience. She urged church leaders and older people to tap that reservoir.

"Retirement does not belong in our vocabulary any more," she said. "There is no retirement from God's world.

Rather than retire, she said, older people should reinvest their lives in the future.

However, Dr. Welch counseled, a mature faith is a necessity.

"The faith of childhood will not take you through," she said. "It cannot be a faith that falters and falls away the minute your ideas are challenged."

Another speaker, the editor of United Methodist church-school publications, said maturity of faith is strongly connected with age—increasing with each decade.

Quoting a recent study, the Rev. Duane A. Ewers said that mature faith could be found especially among those who have been active in church in every decade of their lives and who have been a part of adult Christian education groups.

Older people with mature faith make excellent teachers in the church, Dr. Ewers said.

However many older people have an image problem, several speakers said, both in how they are perceived by others and how they perceive themselves.

"Far too many people have bought the image portrayed on TV," said Paul B. Maves, gerontologist, pastor and author.

"Too often we have allowed our idea of the good life to be formed by those who have something to sell us. We need a new image of the good life. And it seems to me the church is in business to provide the image of the good life."

Many elderly have been stripped of meaningful work, he said. This leaves them feeling that they have no reason to live.

Dr. Maves said that older people need to be needed because they want to do significant things.

Older people and their families have tough issues to face, he said. Among them are questions of quality of life for all.

"We can address the tough issues of life-extending technologies and how they are used," he added. "We can make some decisions ahead of time about how our life is to be lived and how we want to be treated when it is time to die."

While many older adults experience health and financial difficulties, the needs of ethnic minorities of color are even more acute, said David Maldonado, a specialist on elderly ethnic minorities at United Methodist-related Perkins School of Theology.

Dr. Maldonado said these are the minorities who, in the pre-civil rights days, were denied jobs that had health and retirement benefits.

The event's coordinators said plans are underway to have a permanent program for older adults that would be part of the age-level ministries program in the church's General Board of Discipleship. More than one third of the almost 9 million United Methodists in the United States and Puerto Rico are older than 50.

The convocation was sponsored by the church's General Council on Ministries.

STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

FORT WORTH, Texas—At the National Convocation on Older Adult Ministries, Mattie Hendersdn (left), sdng leader, enjoys a moment with long-time friend Elizabeth Welch, the session's keynoter.

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POST-SINGAPORE WORLD METHODIST Council meeting China study tour, August 1-13 led by Rev. Ewing W. Carroll Jr., Director United Methodist China Program. Hongkong/Shanghai/Nanjing/Beijing/Xian/Hongkong. Inclusive price, $1,750. Call (212) 870-3687 if interested. Space available for six persons.

Confirmation remains 'in'—sort of—in baptism study committee's paper

BY DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Latest from the baptism study committee: confirmation is "in"—sort of.

Actually, it was never out, but many United Methodists thought it was, based on discussions last year by the committee.

In the resulting storm of protest, the Rev. Mark C. Trotter, chairman, and others on the committee received a blizzard of mail.

What was "out" and remains out, even after latest revisions in the paper, is the term "confirmation."

The latest proposal is to change the term to "profession of baptismal faith".

Profession of baptismal faith would not be required for church membership because membership would be assumed at baptism, regardless of age.

Preparation for profession of baptismal faith would be similar to what now is known as confirmation in that it would focus on a public commitment of Christian faith made after a person is mature enough to consciously embrace his or her faith.

Dr. Trotter also said that some letters to committee members called for retaining the practice of infant dedication. The committee's latest draft strongly discourages that practice but strongly encourages continuation of infant baptism (see UMR, Jan. 18).

Some letters to the committee expressed concern over use of the word "ordination" in connection with baptism. That word has been dropped from the committee's draft in that connection.

Also a source of concern by some who contacted committee members was language for God to be used in baptism.

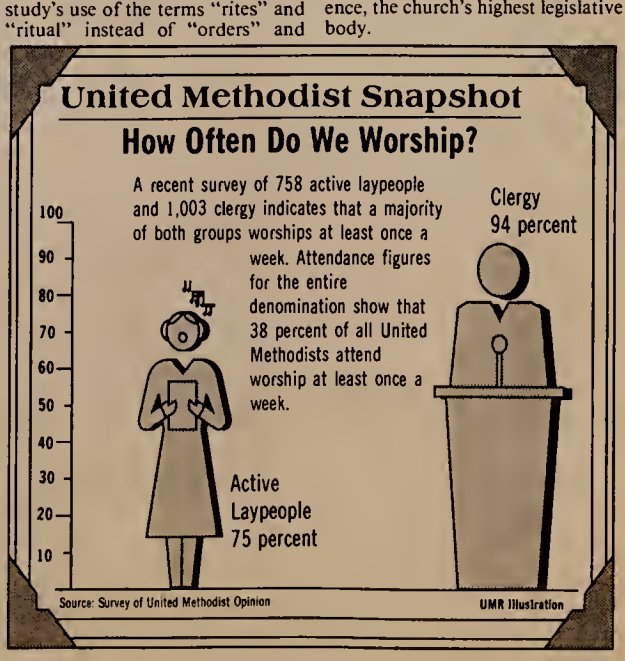
The committee had never considered alternatives to traditional Trinitarian language. Thus, as mandated by the church's 1988 General Conference, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" have been retained by the committee.

Reportedly some United Methodists are concerned about the study's use of the terms "rites" and "ritual" instead of "orders" and "services."

The term "rite," said the Rev. Hoyt L. Hickman, refers to a particular service while the term "ritual" refers to a collection of services.

Dr. Hickman, a staff member of the church's General Board of Discipleship, is considered an authority on worship practices.

The committee's entire report must go to the General Board of Discipleship and may go to the Council of Bishops before being referred to the 1992 General Conference, the church's highest legislative body.



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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Announcing Louisiana United Methodist Subscription Campaign February 3, 1991

The Louisiana United Methodist presents to its readers news of programs, activities, and events that take place throughout the churches, districts, and Conference. In addition, readers are informed of religious news on a national and ecumenical level. The subscription rate will be $12 a year which brings the story of Louisiana Methodism into your home. Each pastor will have subscription forms to be used in the local church for subscribing to the paper. Please mark this important Sunday on your church calendar. If you do not subscribe through a local church, please make your check payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference and mail to 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Mark the check for the Louisiana United Methodist.

War and Peace

There are times when the promotion and programming of church activities pale into the shadows of larger concerns. This is one of those times.

I am reminded that the Russian Orthodox Church was busily engaged in debating paraments for the Christian year when the Marxist Revolution began. I pray that this will not be the sin of the American Church during these troubled times when a war is being fought on faraway desert sands that spill into our living rooms every morning and every evening.

And even as America struggles with the meaning of the Gulf conflict, we watch with concern as the people of the Baltic States demonstrate and die for their freedom.

Let this be a time of prayer; prayers for our loved ones in Desert Storm; prayers for leaders making agonizing decisions; prayers for peace.

Let this be a time of affirming our faith; faith in the ultimate sovereignty of God; faith that the day will soon be upon us when nations "shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruninghooks; when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

Let this be a time of "exercising our humanity"; of sifting through the rhetoric of war and making decisions about our lives that affirm we are the peacemakers of God.

Let us live as children of the covenant affirming that creation is God's and we are an interdependent part of that creation — not to dominate or seek to manage the earth but to celebrate its goodness and affirm the whole globe as sacred space.

William B. Oden

Conference Center Board of Trustees Elected; Charter Signed

Dr. Tom Matheny, newly-elected chairperson of the Conference Center Board of Trustees, announced that the Articles of Incorporation for the new Louisiana Conference Center were signed January 14, 1991, at a meeting at University United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

The signing of the charter is an important step on the long road that will end in the completion of this extremely important project. Bishop William B. Oden characterized this act as "one of the most important . . . for the future of the Conference because of what the Louisiana Conference Center will mean to Louisiana United Methodists."

Dr. Harvey Williamson, Project Coordinator for the Center, said that at the present time Conference-wide offerings will enable the newly-elected Board of Trustees to purchase the 400 acres of land, located five miles south of Alexandria, that had been selected by the Conference earlier. With the act of sale in progress, the Board has chosen the architectual firm of Barron, Heinburg, Brocato of Alexandria to draw plans for the initial phase of the construction. Questionnaires have been sent to local churches asking for grassroots input into the project's direction. Dr. Williamson feels that the Conference Center is "one of the most important projects we've had in the Louisiana Conference in many years."

Besides the election of Dr. Matheny as chairperson of the Center's Board of Trustees, two other officers were installed. They are the Reverend Don Avery, vice-chairperson, and Vera Parker, secretary. Matheny characterized the Board as one that can realize the "great dreams we have for the Center." He is grateful as well for all of the time that Board members have given. Other newly-elected members of the Board of Trustees of the Conference Center are:

Lori Bridges	P.O. Drawer 29, Jena 71342, Alexandria District
Seola Callahan	H.C.-85, Box 130, Oakdale 71463, Lake Charles District
Thomas A. Dunbar	1500 Country Club Road, Lake Charles 70605, Lake Charles District
John M. Evans	Rt. 1, Box 1026, White Castle 70788, Baton Rouge District
Elton C. Harrison	1864 79th Ave., Baton Rouge 70807, Baton Rouge District
M. Leroy Harvey	P.O. Box 297, Jackson 70748, Baton Rouge District
Isiah M. Lee Jr.	4205 Pecan Dr., Alexandria 71301, Alexandria District
Judy McMaster	111 Leo, Shreveport 71105, Shreveport District
Byrl Moreland	909 N. 18th, Monroe 71201, Monroe District
Larry D. Norman	P.O. Box 1210, Many 71449, Shreveport District
Bishop William B. Oden	527 N. Blvd., Baton Rouge 70802
David Sweat	P.O. Box 90-F, Lafayette 70509, Acadiana District
Lucy M. Vincent	1513 Briarwood Dr., Sulphur 70663, Lake Charles District
Paul D. White	5401 Jackson St., Alexandria 71303, Alexandria District
Marcus D. Wren Jr.	Rt. 1, Box 291, Minden 71055, Ruston District
Harvey G. Williamson	2673 Brandywine, Baton Rouge 70808, Baton Rouge District

Reminder: All churches who have members of their congregations serving in Desert Storm please send these names to Dr. Don Cottrill, Executive Operation Director, CCOM, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY

February 14-16, 1991
Scholarships Still Available

"Yes, We'll Gather at the River"
The Louisiana Gathering
March 9, 1991
Baton Rouge Centroplex

'Were Any Folks From Hodge There?'

The other day I had a strange vision: I saw a great throng of people waving banners and perched atop the shoulders of the Ancient of Days, who walked through an old church. Walls crumbled and ceilings fell as he passed. Beams splintered and windows shattered at his song, and pews were smashed by his powerful strides. Now and then he stooped to pick something from the wreckage: an old hymn, maybe, he would save, and many good things that had been stored and forgotten, but much of what was considered holy and important he simply smushed into the floor. And it seemed that with each stride a year of our present century passed into a black and white photograph, depicting great joy and sorrow and yet having no more power over the present, so that the Ancient of Days seemed always to be stepping out of the past, into the future, leaving behind this tapestry of black and white photographs as if he were shedding a great skin. Always before him was light, color, hope, and challenge, while behind lay fond memories but no life or joy.

Besides those who perched on his shoulders were those who caught a ride by clinging to his robe, dangling from his sleeve, or hanging in his hair, not to mention a great many who clung for dear life to his feet, who, despite being dragged through the wreckage, sang for joy like the rest. They would not be left behind in the past, no matter how comfortable, when their friend, the Ancient of Days, was moving so purposefully toward a new day. They knew that, while he was patient and kind, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, he would not be contained by a church that clung sentimentally to the past. And always there were those who refused to take the ride with the Ancient of Days, who instead ran back looking for comfort in the black and white tapestry.

And then, among all those who clung to the Ancient of Days, I began to see familiar faces: some from Hodge, my own included (down at the feet), and many others from churches throughout the Annual Conference, at which point I understood my vision. I was seeing the great gathering of United Methodists that is to take place in Baton Rouge on March 9, 1991, on a Saturday. Over ten thousand will meet there to hop on the shoulders of the Ancient of Days who moves with purpose and great vigor toward the year 2000. The choir for the event already numbers over a thousand and includes some of the great voices from Hodge! Many congregations have already begun work on their banners for the celebration. There will indeed be a great throng — children, youth, and adults — gathering because they will not be left behind in the twentieth century! Gathering to celebrate the present and future with the Ancient Days, and to seek wisdom and power, that they might bear the gospel message in the new day.

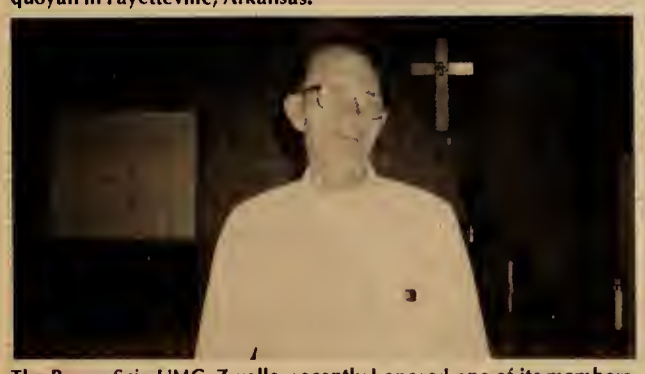
And then I saw the Ancient of Days kneel; but only long enough to pick up a few things worth saving and to give the Louisiana United Methodists enough time to hop on his back or grab a sleeve or something. Then he was off again.

What's that? Were YOU in the vision? I hope so, but I couldn't tell — I was clinging for dear life to his foot!

(This article was written by the Reverend Randall B. Scrivener)

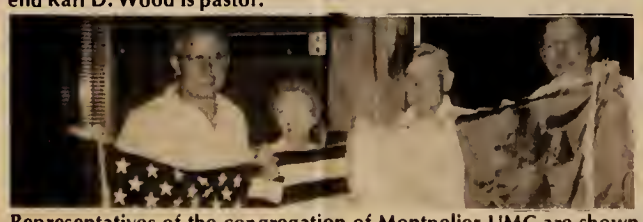
Around The Conference

Shown pictured are the Reverend Bryant Gore and wife Pat and the Reverend Jay Daigle and wife Muriel. The group represented the Louisiana Conference at a meeting of National Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors which was held at Mount Sequoyah in Fayetteville, Arkansas.



The Bayou Scie UMC, Zwolle, recently honored one of its members, Cecil Tooke, at a breakfast. The award was for twenty years of faithful attendance at the morning service. Mr. Tooke, who is also church treasurer, was presented with a certificate and engraved key chain. The Reverend Larry D. Norman is pastor.

Construction has definitely begun and completion is almost near, for the new United Methodist Church in Sun in the North Shore District. The new building will be completely paid by the legacy of the late L. C. Mizell. A portion of the property was donated by Mr. Mizell's son, Floyd. The new facility will include a sanctuary, kitchen, fellowship hall, choir loft, classrooms and pastor study. The Reverend Karl D. Wood is pastor.



Representatives of the congregation of Montpelier UMC are shown holding a flag set from a local Woodmen of the World Chapter. Pictured are: Woodmen of the World President, Gene Simmons; Cornelia Hurst Bond and Hilary E. Watson Sr. accepting the set on behalf of the church; and Ralph Bender, Woodmen of the World Field Representative. The two are long-time members of the North Shore District church.

Summer of 1990 is over, but this group of twenty-two youth and seven adults from Summer Grove UMC in Shreveport, led by the Reverend Terry Love, will not soon forget the good food, hospitality and learning experience they enjoyed on a five-day mission trip to Clanton Chapel in Dulac. The UMYF group conducted a Bible School and repaired and painted parts of the chapel.

Kenner UMC has initiated a new evangelistic program honoring families and/or individuals who have expressed themselves in service and/or talents, over and above the normal expectations of the congregation. Each week a family is singled out for this honor and the very impressive sign is placed on their lawn, thereby, showing the spectators the importance this family has to the Kenner church.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

WCC gathering: Sign of providence urgently needed

The world is only days away from a major event that could merit the label, "providential."

We refer to the World Council of Churches' seventh assembly Feb. 7-20 in Australia.

The WCC's 1948 inaugural assembly in Amsterdam, Netherlands, is rightly recalled with that designation.

Meeting under the theme, "Man's Disorder and God's Design," delegates struggled to discern God's will for a planet reeling from the chaos of a just-ended world war.

Their efforts, particularly to define a "responsible society" that would concretely embody God's love, helped pave the way for rebuilding Western Europe and healing war's wounds.

Now, just as in 1948, the world could scarcely be more in need of the assurance of God's providential care.

As war rages in the Middle East, civil order crumbles in the Soviet Union and millions of Africans face starvation, the WCC assembly's theme—"Come, Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation"—sounds a particularly urgent note of prayer.

We should join in that prayer during the weeks ahead with our 3,500 Christian brothers and sisters gathered in Australia.

Two reasons—one practical, the other theological—underscore this need.

On practical grounds, the sociopolitical climate is favorable for altering public perceptions of the World Council of Churches as a Christian force for spiritual renewal and human reconciliation.

Many U.S. Christians have been skeptical that the WCC does, or can, serve such a constructive purpose—just as many have been similarly unconvinced that the United Nations is capable of promoting world order effectively.

Minds can change, however, when actions, such as the United Nations' handling of the Persian Gulf crisis, are perceived to be ideologically non-partisan and in the interest of global security.

We should pray that World Council of Churches leaders build on the United Nations example. One way they can do so is via distinctively Christian words and deeds from Australia that address "the evils we deplore" with similar statesmanlike perspective and care.

On theological grounds, our troubled world situation offers a golden opportunity for Christians meeting in Australia to witness to the meaning and relevance of unity in Christ.

The church is composed of sinful humans and is therefore as subject to conflict and division as any other institution.

But, as those who follow One who "has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (Ephesians 2:14), we need to show the world that God's love and power to unify is greater than our divisions.

It would be providential indeed if, via a visible spirit of unity at the World Council of Churches assembly in Australia, Christians were to set that example and call a world at war toward shalom (peace).

As the seventh assembly of the World Council of Churches approaches, Feb. 7-20 in Australia, the world could scarcely be more in need of the assurance of God's providential care.

Here I Stand

UMs need to address root causes of social ills

By HASKELL M. MILLER

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Dr. Haskell M. Miller lives Lewes, Del., and is professor emeritus of sociology and social ethics, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

I join my fellow United Methodists in applauding the Council of Bishops' initiative on drugs and violence.

It is a desperately needed, positive approach to a horribly tragic condition in our society. Bishop Felton E. May is giving imaginative and highly creative leadership to the program.

We should all be celebrating the effort, and supporting it generously with our prayers and resources.

At the same time, however, let us remember that it is an effort that correlates with and is being conducted alongside other social concerns of which our church has long been aware.

The bishops' initiative cannot be significantly successful apart from equally serious emphases on these related concerns.

Cities rotting at core

It has been no secret for many years that our cities in America are rotting at the core. More than 40 years ago, Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, warned that we were "storing up dynamite in the slums."

That the dynamite is exploding should be no surprise. The eruption of drugs and violence is merely symptomatic of far more basic problems that have been too long neglected.

The end result of our society's extreme competitiveness, increasing alienation, excessive materialism, reckless hedonism, and awful inequities, is concentrated in and most starkly revealed in our cities' slums.

The problems of drugs and violence, so dramatically evident there, and so noxious to the rest of society, have causal roots deeply embedded in the whole social system.

They are the toxic consequences of racism, poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, parsimonious provision of public services, callous social policies, and demoralizing hopelessness.

American dream denied

In short, they result from denial of the American dream to people trapped in the very heart of situations where the dream is finding its most dramatic expression.

Root causes, as well as the symptoms, must be addressed.

The United Methodist Church has not been unaware of these regrettable causal conditions. But our verbalizing, position-taking and limited programming have fallen short of the needed effectiveness.

Why has this been the case?

Critics may say that it's because we're a comfortable, middle-class church, pleasantly adjusted to American culture, enjoying many prerogatives in the status quo, and not overly anxious to advocate basic change.

United Methodists, they may point out, see things that are wrong, deplore them, but attack them with such limited passion as to make little difference. In this context, dealing with symptoms becomes a tempting diversion from the more difficult and disturbing tasks.

I certainly do not wish to disparage the initiative against drugs and violence. It is the kind of creative, experimental effort the church should be continually undertaking.

I long to see it undergirded, however, by fuller engagement with the broader and more basic issues. The conditions that are making slums in our cities, and causing the demoralizing, anger, despair and anti-social attitudes that account for so much of the drug culture and its attendant crime and violence, need to be attacked with much more fervor than we currently are exhibiting.

The great need of United Methodism is to become more fully, sensitively, and responsively aware of the many conditions in our society that are in serious contradiction of Christian values.

And that need must prompt fuller commitment to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in pursuit of needed changes.

Letters to the Editor

Conscientious objector 'obviously has seen a light'

I was very saddened to read the letters to the editor criticizing Sgt. George Morse in the Jan. 11 issue.

Both of the letters printed are in conflict with what God calls us as Christians to do and to believe. How can we be angry at someone who does not want to participate in killing?

The letter writers believe that because Sgt. Morse has been in military service he should now be ready to fight. However, perhaps just as Paul changed, so too did Sgt. Morse.

Like Paul, Sgt. Morse obviously has seen a light. The truth is what he is speaking, not a dishonesty to our country, but the truth of the message Jesus brought to this earth long ago: "Blessed are the peacemakers." (Matthew 5:9)

Sgt. Morse doesn't need our sympathy. He needs only God's grace for speaking the truth. And the truth shall set us free.

Christine Charnock
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Maybe we can't change

A very astute letter appeared in the Jan. 11 issue regarding the change of mind of Sgt. George Morse who, while enlisted in the Army, wants to declare as a conscientious objector (see UMR, Jan. 11).

The letter cited the sergeant's acceptance of pay, position and promotion and states that he should have displayed more honor and personal integrity.

It also attributed the reduced influence and size of United Methodism to decreased emphasis on personal morality and integrity.

I think that the letter writer inadvertently has provided the real reason for the decrease of influence of most mainline denominations.

Based on the logical extension of the writer's reasoning, too many people have been trained, paid and promoted in the "cause of materialism" (even within our churches).

Now, through "personal morality and integrity" in following Mammon, they cannot change to following Christ!

Clarence E. Spier
Indio, California

Palestinians supported

We have been to Israel's occupied territories several times and were there when the Iraqi problem erupted.

So, we shared with Palestinians their hope that the resulting crisis would draw attention to the occupation they have endured for 23 years.

We are getting frequent calls now for answers and for slide presentations to churches, schools, colleges and anti-war groups.

Christians finally are awakening to the grave injustices Palestinians have been subjected to as the World Methodist Council chief executive, the Rev. Joe Hale, has frequently pointed out.

As Christians, we have no choice but to pray and involve ourselves for peace. As taxpayers, involuntarily subsidizing oppression by the Israelis, we must also speak out and let elected officials know we will not tolerate such atrocities any longer.

We must speak against and act against such things without fear, especially in an area where the bulk of our foreign aid goes.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Rogers
Stone Mountain, Georgia

Are there strings?

The Jan. 4 issue carried an article about United Methodism's Africa University.

It reported the awarding of a site and development grant to the university by the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad and quoted David Santos, director of that office.

The article neglected to make clear that the purpose of Africa University is not to "transfer American educational ideas and practices to Africa," which is quoted as the goal of Mr. Santos' office.

The article raises for readers the question of whether there are any strings attached to the grant from the U.S. government agency.

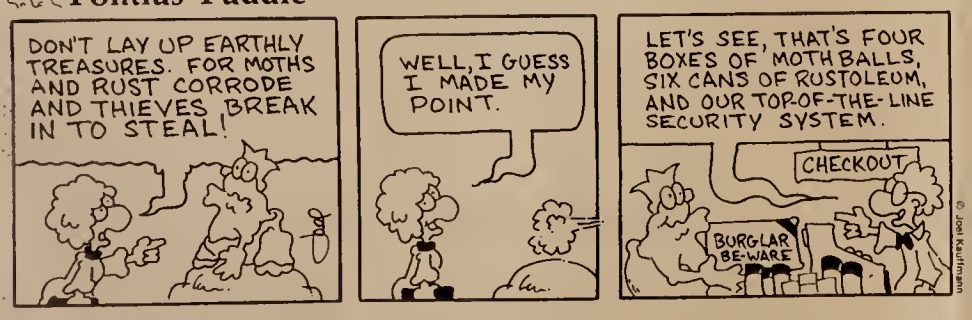
According to the action taken by the 1988 General Conference, the Africa University is to be "international in design and spirit . . . a university for all Africa."

My understanding is that it is to provide a setting, facilities and time for Africans to study subjects and acquire skills appropriate to enable them to serve their people and their nations—that is, to offer an environment in which the faith and gifts and visions of Africans will be nurtured to find expression in their communities and cultures.

Sometimes we are privileged to have some part in the experience of other cultures, as is the case with the Africa University. But the exciting thing is that, as I understand it, the university is meant to be an African institution.

Helen Post
Evanston, Illinois

Pontius' Puddle



Welcome to new readers in Metairie, La.

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 1,050 member-families of **Munholland United Methodist Church in Metairie, La.** (Louisiana Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Metairie, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

What others are saying

"Before the war, millions of people were praying for peace. When war came, they prayed that it might swiftly end. Both before and afterward, they prayed for the safety of loved ones, for wisdom in world leaders, for a minimum of bloodshed, for their own peace of soul. . . . Only to the unknowing could this public turning to God have come as a total surprise. . . . To some extent, what has been seen in the last two weeks is a surfacing of a great underground river of prayer that flows all the time."

—Peter Steinfels, religion editor, "New York Times."

* * *

"God works through imagination. What we cannot imagine we cannot do. A congregation that cannot imagine committed and vigorous ministry to the larger community will never offer it. What is desperately needed throughout the faith community and our whole society is a healing of the imagination. We must not batter our creative people and our own imaginative function out of timidity and fear."

—The Rev. Carmen Pak, pastor, La Verne, Calif. (California-Pacific Annual Conference)

* * *

"Wherever we find ourselves in life there is the possibility for that particular location to become the most important place in the world. Jesus' presence with us makes any place we are different."

—The Rev. Thomas H. Cloyd, director, Tennessee conference council on ministries

"While for some the long 'winter' can be dreary and confining, for the Christian it need not be so. It is a time to recall the first messengers who went out and told the story and brought light to those in darkness."

—United Methodist Bishop Woodie W. White, Illinois Area

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!" (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: John 16:23)

Readings for week of Feb.4

Monday: Psalms 111
Tuesday: Psalms 112
Wednesday: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Thursday: Mark 1:21-28
Friday: Mark 1:29-39
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 8:1-6
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 8:7-13

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

P.O.W. IS UM: Navy Lt. Jeffrey Zaun, a U.S. prisoner of war who has been shown on Iraqi television, is a United Methodist from Cherry Hill, N.J. He was one of seven pilots from allied forces interviewed under duress Jan. 20 on an Iraqi broadcast. His parents, Calvin and Marge Zaun, and sister, Linda Zaun, are members of St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Cherry Hill. "I have been in contact with them constantly," the Rev. Charles Wilcock said. "They are doing very well. The fact that he is alive is giving them hope."

ECONOMIC CONCERNS: The independent group, Methodists United for Peace and Justice, based in Washington, opposes any cutting of domestic programs to pay for the war. The group opposes allowing President Bush and Congress "to use deficit financing, which the next generation must repay." Instead, either a war surtax levied on individual and corporate income, or cancellation of weapons systems designed for use against the Soviet Union is proposed.

DEATH PENALTY: A position paper on the death penalty, under preparation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will include statements supporting capital punishment, alongside a task force recommendation to abolish capital punishment.

STEPS TOWARD UNITY: After two decades of formal unity talks, theologians from the Episcopal Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have achieved a major breakthrough that could lead the two denominations to a relationship of "full communion," including mutual recognition of clergy and sharing of the Eucharist.

POLICY CRITICS RAPPED: Many religious critics of the United States' policies in the Persian Gulf are "selective rather than principled pacifists" who "do not deserve to be taken seriously by U.S. policymakers," according to the Washington-based Institute on Religion and Democracy.

WOMAN HURT IN BLAST: A Turkish woman suffered a fractured collarbone when a bomb exploded Jan. 23 in the Istanbul office of the Amerikan Bord Heyeti, related to the United Church of Christ's Board for World Ministries. The Rev. Mel Wittler, director, said it was targeted "probably because we are an American organization rather than because we are a religious organization."

SHOBHAN is the fourth child in a family of six children. His parents are illiterate daily laborers who live in Pattloor Village, India "Home" is a thatched roof hut with mud walls. Shobhan has been accepted at a Christian boys' orphanage, but he needs a sponsor to provide food, clothing and educational materials.

For only $13 a month—— less than 44 cents a day— you could sponsor Shobhan or someone like him. The child will receive food for body and spirit, as **World's Children, Inc.** is a Christian organization, founded by a Methodist minister and his wife.

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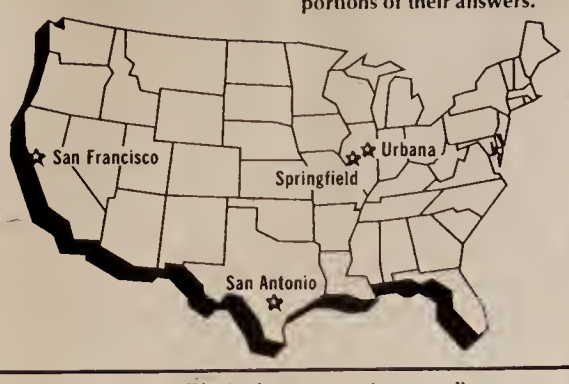
War spurs UMs to put faith into action

Pastoral concern leads 'heartland'

Witness amid War

Stories by CYNTHIA B. ASTLE, *Associate Editor*

EDITOR'S NOTE: What's bringing the Persian Gulf war home for United Methodists? The Reporter talked with United Methodist pastors in three diverse settings: San Francisco, site of many anti-war demonstrations; San Antonio, historic home base for thousands of military families, and Central Illinois—the nation's heartland. These articles tell portions of their answers.



Wartime ministry in America's heartland provides plenty of what that regional handle implies—"heart."

Grace UMC, Springfield

Predominantly black Grace United Methodist Church in Springfield, Ill., has added a special time of personal expression to its worship service.

The practice probably will continue for the duration of the war, said its pastor, the Rev. Robert J. Freeman.

"We've allowed people to grieve, cry, talk during worship," he said.

"We let both sides speak and we say both feelings are valid. We pray for peace and we back the troops."

Grace UMC has 10 of its 350 members on duty in Saudi Arabia. Among them is a mother called up to serve as head nurse for a National Guard medical team.

However, support for the troops hasn't precluded the 100-year-old middle-class congregation's willingness to be involved in anti-war work.

Anti-war protesters and ecumenical groups have been allowed to use Grace's sanctuary for meetings and press conferences.

In addition, the sanctuary is open 7:30-8:30 a.m. daily for prayer and meditation.

"Many people of Springfield are here every day," Mr. Freeman said.

The response of Grace's members to such a mixture of pastoral care and prophetic witness is "fantastic," said the pastor.

"People have responded favorably to my openness from the pulpit to air all views," Mr. Freeman said. "Because of what Martin Luther King Jr. stood for, we think of all people as brothers and sisters. We pray that peace will come upon Saddam's heart."

Wesley UMC, Urbana

A similar heartfelt mix of pastoral care and peacemaking marks the response of 775-member Wesley United Methodist Church near the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana.

The Rev. Miley E. Palmer, senior pastor, said the presence of 1,460 students in the Wesley Foundation, located in the church building, has been a significant influence.

"We're the site of the original Wesley Foundation in the U.S., so we have quite a history," Mr. Palmer explained.

"In early January, the students organized and led a candlelight walk for peace across the campus on a bitterly cold, icy night. We went to Memorial Stadium, which is named for the town's dead from World War I, and prayed for peace."

Although a predominantly white congregation, Wesley UMC also has a large multicultural ministry, funded by a grant from the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The ministry reaches the university's Asian-American population, the largest among "Big 10" colleges.

Wesley's multicultural awareness has led the church to strive for not just an ecumenical, but an interfaith, witness in its worship.

"We've used a variety of religious insights from Buddhists, Bahais, Jews, Sikhs and Muslims in our weekday noon prayer services," Mr. Palmer explained. "It's remarkable to have a Jew and then a Muslim read prayers for peace from their respective traditions."

Besides students, Wesley's congregation includes farmers, businesspeople, university faculty and administrators and a growing number of non-student young adults.

There are also military families.

Five Wesley families have kin in Operation Desert Storm, and more are being called up, the pastor said.

The nearness of Chanute Air Force Base to Urbana and the presence of retired military personnel among the members have required an additional sensitivity from the congregation, Mr. Palmer said.

"Some are concerned that prayers for peace might imply lack of support for fighting men and women, and we talk frankly about that," Mr. Palmer added. "We're careful in our prayers to support the troops."

He said one member placed an anonymous note under his office door saying that he or she appreciated the sensitivity the congregation is showing to people on all sides of the war.

"The war seems to be a time when the community of faith has a unique opportunity to reflect on and make witness to its faith," Mr. Palmer noted.

"Most of us know someone who's in the war. Our thoughts, our hopes are shaped by that knowledge. It's a time to bring faith to bear through study, prayer, reflection and witnessing.

"Harry Emerson Fosdick, during World War II, wrote his classic, 'It's a Great Time to Be a Christian.' In a sense, that's true for us now, too, and I hope churches take advantage of it."

Candles, signs mark faith vigils

From news and staff reports

Here are excerpts from United Methodists' "witness amid war" elsewhere around the U.S.:

■ Nearly 600,000 United Methodists in Pennsylvania have been called on by their spiritual leaders to pray continuously for peace in the Middle East and to place lighted "candles of hope" in home windows.

■ The 750 United Methodist churches in the denomination's Baltimore Annual Conference (Washington, most of Maryland and part of West Virginia) have been asked to put signs on their lawns and white ribbons on their doors as a reminder to pray for peace in the Middle East.

■ A "prayer wall for peace" that will contain cards with the names of relatives and friends in the Persian Gulf has been set up by Central Pennsylvania United Methodists outside Bishop Felton E. May's office in Harrisburg, Pa.

■ Japanese-American United Methodists in the greater San Francisco Bay Area are protesting Arab-bashing, said the Rev. Lloyd K. Wake, a retired minister who heads the Asian-American caucus of the California-Nevada Annual Conference. "It brings back memories of our own experience during World War II, when we were indiscriminately declared to be the perpetrators of war because of an accident of birth," said Mr. Wake.

Congregation sees anti-war effort as 'prophetic witness'

First St. John's UMC, San Francisco

Even before U.S. troops were first deployed last August to Saudi Arabia, the congregation of First St. John's United Methodist Church in San Francisco has seen itself much like John the Baptist—a voice in the wilderness crying out against war.

Since then, members of First St. John's helped organize an anti-war protest that drew 6,000 on Jan. 6 to nearby St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. More First St. John's members were among thousands who participated in two nationally linked anti-war demonstrations on Jan. 19 and 26.

On Jan. 15, the deadline set by the United Nations for Iraq to leave occupied Kuwait, three church members were among those arrested in an anti-war protest at San Francisco's Federal Building.

Three days later, another member was arrested during a mock funeral procession toward the Presidio, a major U.S. Army installation overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge.

This kind of "prophetic witness" is the essence of First St. John's congregational identity, said its pastor, the Rev. John Chamberlin, a Presbyterian minister who serves the congregation located near Nob Hill.

Mr. Chamberlin said "questions of conscience" are fueling the congregation's active involvement in San Francisco area anti-war protests.

"We formally organized a social concerns committee this past spring, then we voted to be a peace-with-justice congregation in July," the pastor explained.

"I would say that fundamentally our witness comes out of our taking the Gospel seriously in the context of the real world in which we live.

"We take seriously the Gospel mandate to love our enemies—at least those the government would have us believe are our enemies. So we're concerned that Iraqi civilian casualties so far haven't even been a subject for debate on national TV. It's very upsetting what's on national news networks.

Its activism is at odds with the image many have of downtown "Old First" churches. Founded in 1847, First St. John's claims to be one of the oldest Protestant churches in San Francisco.

The congregation has 100 members, half of whom are Asian-Americans and nearly all of whom are active in the anti-war movement, said its pastor.

"I don't know anyone who classifies himself or herself as an absolute pacifist," he said. "But we're deeply committed to the philosophy of nonviolence as shown by Martin Luther King Jr., [Mohandas K.] Gandhi and ultimately Jesus.

"I think that most people here feel it's impossible to be fully human in the last decade of the 20th century without a social conscience. We've been asking questions of conscience, and we encourage people to act on their conscience."

Those who feel that the Persian Gulf war is a justified response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait would not likely find support for their position at First St. John's, he added.

"No, we're not encouraging anyone to support the war; there's nobody like that in this congregation," he said.

"Everyone agrees we want to support our troops. The more activist among us want to support them by helping to end the war quickly so they come home safely."

Military-town churches bridge differing views with prayer

University UMC, San Antonio

In a military town like San Antonio, Texas, you'd expect local congregations would be gung-ho to back the troops.

What you might not expect to find is active dialogue between those who hold that view and those who believe that war is wrong.

"We have a lot of mixed emotions," said the Rev. Glenn P. Hall, associate pastor of University United Methodist Church and a retired U.S. Army chaplain.

"All of us want peace and we all work toward the hope that sometime there will be peace. At the same time we recognize that that's not the real world we live in, so we pray for those caught up in the war and for guidance for the leaders trying to resolve the issue.

"People express their views in discussions at church, and it's a healthy mix. The congregation here allows each other to disagree and accepts each other in their disagreements."

A predominantly white, middle-to-upper-middle class suburban congregation of 1,840 members, University UMC has at least 25 families with kin deployed in Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia.

Another 40 or so families have relatives stationed at local bases or on standby alert in the reserves.

The congregation also has one "oil-patch" connection: a family with a relative who works with petroleum interests in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Because local military bases have established support groups for families, University has concentrated on spiritual aspects of the war, Mr. Hall said.

"We have a very large 'Walk to Emmaus' [spiritual formation] community," he explained. "More than 300 meet weekly and are praying about the war regularly.

"The war is a big discussion topic in our Disciple Bible study classes. They get out current maps and historic maps and talk about what's happening there and what's happened in the past."

Jefferson UMC, San Antonio

Located closer to downtown San Antonio in a changing urban neighborhood, Jefferson United Methodist Church began a support group for military families in August.

"We were the first church in San Antonio to start one and we're the only United Methodist-sponsored one," said the Rev. Roberto Escamilla, pastor.

"We're in a compassionate ministry of support to those here and their loved ones in Saudi Arabia."

Dr. Escamilla said the group has undertaken several projects such as writing letters to the troops and sending them cookies and toiletries.

Prayer requests from group participants and from people in the community are frequent, he added.

"We really feel that now, more than ever, this particular support group is highly important for the city," he said.

Dr. Escamilla said that many of Jefferson's 650 white, black and Hispanic members work in support jobs on military bases around San Antonio.

"Three or four" Jefferson UMC families have relatives on military duty in Saudi Arabia.

"There is no tension in the congregation between pro-war and anti-war," he said. "There is consensus that we're in it, so let's support our troops and pray for them."

La Trinidad UMC, San Antonio

The Persian Gulf war has caused La Trinidad United Methodist Church—the largest and oldest Spanish-speaking congregation in greater San Antonio—to turn inward, seeking solace and understanding from God.

"We're all saddened," said the Rev. Daniel Z. Rodriguez, pastor.

"The people are supportive now that the troops are there, praying for them and trying to understand what's going on.

"I would also suspect, however, that people feel strongly that President Bush probably didn't use all of his patience and resourcefulness in using other diplomatic methods."

Only one La Trinidad member, a pharmacist in a U.S. Army Reserve medical unit, has been called up for active duty.

The 700-member congregation has not felt called to join in either pro-war or anti-war demonstrations in San Antonio, he added.

"I think that there is a feeling that this is real serious warfare," he said. "People are pretty concerned and fearful about what might happen—for instance, if Israel gets involved and how that might affect us globally.

"In a sense, it's almost a feeling of impending disaster."

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

A soldier looks to God

SOMEWHERE IN SAUDI ARABIA—Army Private Robert Edwards of Carson, Calif., stands guard duty with a special message—"Lord, be with us!"—on his helmet. He's with the 1st Armored Division.

Faith connections

STILL USEFUL: Historically black colleges have not outlived their usefulness in American society, according to the two interviewees on the next production of the United Methodist TV series, "Catch the Spirit." Dr. Shirley Lewis, director of United Methodism's Black College Fund, and Beverly James, a senior at Bennett College in Greensboro, N.C., appear on the segment scheduled to air the week of Feb. 2.

SCHOOL NOT LISTED: The first request of a non-United Methodist school to be listed by the denomination's University Senate has been refused. The 25-member University Senate recently turned down the request of Urbana (Ohio) University because of "no evidence of a relationship between Urbana and the United Methodist Church." The University Senate reviews and approves educational institutions for church affiliation. Schools listed by the University Senate must meet certain guidelines, including racial and gender inclusiveness in faculty and student body, clearly defined church relationships, and sound management.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: United Methodists wanting to serve as pages and marshals at the 1992 session of their church's top legislative assembly have been invited to submit applications. Both clergy and laypersons are eligible. About 150 volunteers will be chosen. Marshals and pages serve at their own expense, but an offering will be taken during the meeting to defray part of their costs. The General Conference will be in session May 5-15, 1992, in Louisville, Ky. Applications should be sent to the Rev. Mark R. Wharff, Holy Cross United Methodist Church, 1200 West Hammer Lane, Stockton, CA 95209.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Inquiry dropped

United Methodist News Service

The United Methodist University Senate does not plan to further investigate charges by an Oklahoma congregation that witchcraft was practiced at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

In a statement from its Jan. 16-17 meeting in San Francisco, the 25-member body said:

"After careful investigation through the Commission on Theological Schools concerning the allegation brought by Ketchum United Methodist Church against Perkins School of Theology, the University Senate found no pattern of events which compromise in any way the institutional integrity of Perkins. Thus, there is no further investigation on this case."

A July 27 letter addressed to the senate outlined "official charges" against Perkins by the administrative board of the 400-member First United Methodist Church in Ketchum, Okla.

The letter, signed by Bill Raus, chairman of the church's administrative board, criticized the school for "allowing the practice of witchcraft."

The workshop in question, one of several examining the role of women in various religious traditions, was held last February during "Women's Week," sponsored by Perkins Women Students. Attendance at the off-campus event was optional.

The Ketchum church board asked the University Senate to "decertify" Perkins, reprimand school officials and establish specific guidelines mandating that study of other religions at United Methodist-related seminaries be conducted "in accordance with the teachings of the church."

Lay speaking: More than filling a pulpit

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

ORLANDO, Fla.—Esta Mae Bedenbaugh of Lake City, Fla., gets up every Sunday at 5:30 a.m. for an 8 a.m. worship service at Lake Butler (Fla.) Prison.

There she preaches the Gospel to 100 men, talks with their families or offers assistance to prisoners, some of whom are AIDS patients.

Mrs. Bedenbaugh is not ordained. She's a certified United Methodist lay speaker and has been for 15 years.

"You don't have to speak in a pulpit to be a lay speaker," says Mrs. Bedenbaugh, a member of Lake City's Bethel United Methodist Church.

"You can be a low-profile person and share the Lord Jesus with those who have only a few months to live, like death row prisoners or AIDS patients," she said.

"To share the Lord Jesus Christ with one who only has a few months to live is a privilege."

Unlimited learning, service

Mrs. Bedenbaugh, by doing more than speaking but also by leading and caring, is one of several persons who have helped change the definition of "lay speaker" in United Methodism.

She was one of some 200 United Methodist laity—and a few clergy—at the Second Quadrennial Meeting on Lay Speaking, Jan. 11-13.

The meeting's theme was "Lay Speaking: Unlimited Learning and Service." But don't let this theme fool you: Only one-third of the 18 training sessions involved "lay speaking" and improving verbal communication skills.

During her workshop entitled "When Lay Speakers Are in Charge of Worship Services," Mrs. Bedenbaugh explained that being responsible for worship can involve duties such as writing the order of worship, serving as a greeter, or offering the pastor special assistance.

Agreeing with her was Evelyn Burry, staff executive of the Section on Ministry of the Laity at the church's General Board of Discipleship.

Ms. Burry said, "During the era of Methodism's founder, John Wesley, there were class leaders, exhorters, local preachers, lay leaders and lay speakers. Today, lay speakers have increased their witness."

Mrs. Burry told the Reporter that the Book of Discipline—the church's book of laws—has provided for lay speakers since 1822. Certification of lay speakers through advanced courses was added in 1948.

They did a great job

"When the church was expanding during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, lay speakers were often asked to fill pulpits," she continued. "They did such a great job that people forgot what else we were supposed to do."

Now the lay-speaking movement has "gone back to its roots," sending people into nursing homes for caring ministries, prisons for evangelism ministries, and even starting Sunday school classes through leadership ministries.

Mrs. Burry told the Reporter that some people believe that the term "lay speaker" is inadequate.

During a special meeting of people who direct district-wide lay-speaking programs, some asked if the name could be changed. They say it scares some people who might otherwise take the courses and have a chance to grow spiritually.

Ms. Burry, however, reported that a survey recently showed that the majority of lay speakers prefer the historical name.

Mrs. Burry added that lay speakers don't necessarily fill the positions of local church lay leaders.

However, the Rev. Edward Paup, a district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain conference, contended that all lay leaders should complete the basic lay-speaking program.

"If all lay leaders took this course, they would know what they're supposed to do," said Mr. Paup. He relies on a strong lay leadership in his Utah-Western District, one of the church's largest with a a 700-mile radius.

"It would empower more laity and help us unleash a more powerful ministry," he added.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

ORLANDO, Fla.—Sounding the call for more lay speakers across United Methodism are Betty Wilson and the Rev. Kenneth Gifford, both from the East Ohio Annual Conference. Later Mr. Gifford donned a Donald Duck hat from nearby Walt Disney World to illustrate that lay speakers may be required to wear more than one "hat."

Are you ready to speak?

You are ready to become a lay speaker if you:

- Are ready to share your faith;
- Are willing to go wherever and whenever God calls you;
- Will commit your time and energy to the service of your neighbor;
- Desire to share God's love;
- Realize that God's presence is more important than stage presence.

Candidates for designation as local church lay speakers are recommended by their pastor and the administrative council or board of their home church. They complete a basic course for lay speaking and must reapply each year, reporting how they have served and continued to learn during that year.

Certified lay speakers serve in their own churches, in other churches and through district or conference programs. They must also be recommended, complete the basic course and one of 10 advanced lay speaking courses and be interviewed by the district or conference committee on lay speaking. They must report and reapply annually and must complete at least one advanced course every three years.

Pastor gets serious about food and spiritual diets

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

The Rev. St. George I.B. Crosse of Randallstown, Md., said he was tired of being literally the "biggest preacher in town."

So the United Methodist minister asked the Lord to help him become more disciplined. Result? He went from 419 pounds to 201.

How? Mr. Crosse said he became serious about his food *and* spiritual diets.

In a recent issue of the weekly "Jet" magazine, Mr. Crosse was quoted as saying he started his weight-loss program nearly two years ago. He reached his weight goal in September 1989 after 14½ months on a strict diet.

In an interview with the the Reporter, the 51-year-old Mr. Crosse said he had become tired of being the center of "fat jokes."

People made fun of him when he preached, because he was always so exhausted.

"When you're throwing around 400 pounds, preaching is not easy," said Mr. Crosse, pastor for the 100-member Fallston-Federal Hill Charge (St. James UMC in Jarrettsville, Md., and Tabernacle UMC in Fallston, Md.)

A fourth generation Methodist minister whose family is from the West Indies, Mr. Crosse said a further impetus to lose weight came when he was in a radio studio doing a program with two other ministers.

"All three of us were obese, but I'm the only one who is alive now," he said. "When I heard that one of the ministers died right in the church, I wanted to get the weight off. So I asked the Lord for help.

"I said, 'Lord, I love you and I want to be a treadmill for you, but I can't do it with all this weight.'"

Mr. Cross said that his first attempt at losing weight, a quick-loss program, didn't work because he cheated all the time.

Mr. Crosse described a typical scenario he and many United Methodist ministers encounter when they are invited to a church function featuring a hearty meal (see accompanying story). Do you turn down a delicious meal and hurt your members' feelings or do you watch your waistline? he asked.

"Plus, my wife is from South Carolina and she's a great cook, too. And you know how it is when you've been out at a meeting, then come home at night and your wife expects you to eat what she has prepared, too," he said.

Finally, Mr. Crosse said, he realized that the only way he was going to reduce his size was to "practice what ministers preach."

"The Scripture says in John 10:10, 'The thief comes to steal and destroy.' Anything that steals from relationships will destroy us. Believe me, I have seen preachers and local church people destroyed from overeating.

Mr. Crosse said he believes that "losing weight is a spiritual matter."

"I think overeating and eating disorders are spiritual problems. I had to look at myself and see why I was abusing food. I had to find out what is the need I needed to fulfill with food. When I found that, I really got into a positive lifestyle."

Now he eats only at specific meal times and walks for an hour each morning. Mr. Crosse added that his walks are the best time for Scripture memorization and to talk to God.

"I say to my fellow ministers, especially those who are overweight, 'You might not become a better preacher, but if you lose weight, you'll preach longer.' And to the church members I say, 'Your minister can serve you better if you encourage ministers to take care of themselves physically."

More than enough to go around, says the Rev. St. George I.B. Crosse after he dieted from 419 pounds to 201. He says he discovered the need for two diets: one spiritual, the other physical.

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POST-SINGAPORE WORLD METHODIST Council meeting China study tour, August 1-13 led by Rev. Ewing W. Carroll Jr., Director United Methodist China Program. Hongkong/Shanghai/Nanjing/Beijing/Xian/Hongkong. Inclusive price, $1,750. Call (212) 870-3687 if interested. Space available for six persons.

RESIDENT MANAGER OPPORTUNITIES. National Church Residences, a national organization serving seniors, has on-going opportunities for special individuals to manage our independent retirement facilities. As a non-profit organization of Christian heritage, it is particularly important that we staff our facilities with caring individuals with a sense of mission. If you are willing to relocate to expand your horizons with a leader in independent living, send your confidential resume to: National Church Residences, Human Resource Dept, Attn: RM, 2335 North Bank Drive, Columbus, OH 43220. Equal opportunity employer.

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PUPPET MINISTRY? WE HAVE PUPPETS, scripts, tapes, instruction, and supplies including ventriloquist dummies. Information free. 1991 catalog: $2.00. Maher, Dept. MR, Box 420, Littleton, CO 80160. (303) 798-6830.

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ACCREDITED DEGREE/HOME STUDY. Christian Bible College, Station Square, Suite 227, Rocky Mt., NC 27804. Catalog: $1 (919) 442-1211.

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MUSICAL LEADERSHIP FOR YOUR church. Fill your music staff position (20-40 hours weekly) with a trained professional. Outstanding persons available. Free service. Church Musicians' National Referral Service, Dept. 18, Box 36, Huntington, WV 25706-0036.

VISITING NEW ORLEANS? WORSHIP at First Methodist, 3401 Canal Street. Dr. Ken Jones, pastor. Classes: 9:30 a.m. Worship: 11:00 a.m. (504) 488-0856.

TWO FULL-TIME STAFF PERSONS sought: Director of Children's Ministries and Director of Youth Ministries. We desire to build program. Seminary degree not required; experience helpful. La Jolla UMC, 6063 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla, CA 92037. Competitive salary and benefits package. Contact: Dr. Robert Fehlmen, phone (619) 454-7108.

INTERESTED IN A LOCAL church edition of the UMR? Contact: Ron Adams or Christine Bishop, United Methodist Reporter, Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275. (214) 630-6495.

Covered-dish dinners notwithstanding, this 'obese' superintendent fights back

Reporter Staff Special

"I cannot condemn the covered dish dinners at our United Methodist churches, because in the Gospel we learn that the best times are when we sit down at the table," says the Rev. Daniel B. Johnson, superintendent of the Parkersburg District in the West Virginia Annual Conference.

"However, we are not helping people by encouraging obesity in the church."

In 1989, Mr. Johnson, who described himself as "being an obese person all my life," became superintendent over 65 charges, composed of 150 local churches.

"It was then that I started feeling real conscious of my witness as a district superintendent who was obese," said the 45-year-old minister.

"My first year as a superintendent I put on 40 pounds. That's when I made my commitment to lose weight."

A year ago, when he started the diet, Mr. Johnson weighed 315. Today: 194.

Regarding his determination to lose weight, he said, "It's the old concept of modeling: everyone models after someone, including local church pastors. But in my present role, being in front of pastors and lay people as I was, it became extremely obvious to me what I was modeling.

"At one time I was even providing unnecessary foods during district functions. I've stopped doing it, and no one has complained. My district pastors and my colleagues on the cabinet have been truly supportive."

Mr. Johnson said he began to set the tone for a healthier district by either choosing not to eat at church functions or by bringing his own low-calorie meals.

He added that, for the first time, he feels "more in control" of his life.

After gaining confidence that he could lose weight, he began an intensive, medically formulated diet under supervision of a physician.

Mr. Johnson said he has kept his weight down for five months and plans to continue. He said his wife and children are extremely positive about his weight-loss program.

"My kids have never said anything about my weight, but now they comment because I'm not sedentary."

"We exercise and ride bikes together. They are pleased with how I look, and it is a motivation not to slip back. I am committed to that because it's got to be a daily discipline."

Churches rally behind burned-out businessman

United Methodist News Service

Churches in Blissfield, Mich., have rallied around a Palestinian-American who was a victim of anti-Arab hostility.

The Dairy Queen owned by Kareem Khoury—who attends and teaches Sunday School at Blissfield's First United Methodist Church—was vandalized Jan. 18 and destroyed by fire four days later.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

37 NUMBER 37 018000 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 FEBRUARY 8, 1991

When Clergy Lose Their Teeth For the Wrong Reasons

You may have noticed the article in the newspaper. It was one of those human interest filler stories that generate a brief chuckle before the reader moves on to another page. It concerned an Illinois minister who had a unique witness. He would lift people off the ground with his teeth in a worship service in order to demonstrate the power of God. The person being lifted would lie down, a rope would be tied to the waist, and the minister would put the rope in his mouth, and the glory of God would be manifested. He credited prayer and God's power for making his fete possible.

Then one Sunday morning a church member brought into the worship service a 300-pound friend. The congregation urged the minister to demonstrate bis faith. He did, and just as the minister got the worshipper airborn — alas; he promptly lost seven teeth, and the man hit the floor with a thud.

Now, I must confess that this herculean homeletician may well be my patron saint. He helps me see that no minister including a bishop — however strong his or her teeth may be — can carry the weight of the church. And God knows I have tried.

Every now and tben I need to learn all over again that the clergy have very meaningful roles in the church, but carrying the whole congregational load isn't one of them.

Thank God for committed lay leadership, staff, Sunday School teachers, and a strong, healthy community of faith that does not expect their ministers to have invincible mouths!

William B. Oden

The Louisiana Gathering
A Time to Celebrate Who We Are

Identity is a major issue for most of us. We want to know who we are and who others are. We want to be a part of a group, and at the same time we have a yearning to be an individual, unique and accepted for who we are in our own right.

The Louisiana Gathering is to be a rally of 10,000 Louisianians who are called United Methodists. Above that, it is a meeting of Christians, of followers of the Christ. The New Testament tells us that "Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God" (I Peter 2:10). Our faith affirms that those who are baptized believers are members of one body and that the Church is the body of Christ in the world. It is important for us to recall our interdependency and our connection as members of the one body.

Our Methodist heritage tells of many large gatherings. John Wesley spoke to huge crowds, reported to have been in the thousands. In these meetings, the gospel was preached, prayers were given and the throngs joined their voices in praise to God and Christ in song. The spirit of those early meetings continued in this country through the camp meeting and the revival or "protracted" meetings. Once again, the purpose was to hear the gospel through sermons, prayers and song, and to respond through confession, repentance and belief in Jesus as Lord and Savior. These meetings were a time of reflection and renewal, of remembrance of past sins and celebration of future hope.

Even in the midst of war, or perhaps especially in the midst of war, we are to gather to praise God and remember who we are. The Louisiana Gathering will be a chance to **Gather at the River** for a holy time. It will remind us that each of us has an important part to play in the whole body of the Church, yet each of us has unique talents and skills to offer. We will remember our baptism, affirm our faith, hear the good news through Scripture and the sharing of the Word, and sing the songs of the message of God's love for God's creation. Then we will share our visions and dreams for the future of our local churches and their ministries in Christ's name.

Who are we? We are God's people — the Church of Jesus Christ!

Yes, we'll gather at the river
The beautiful, the beautiful river
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God.

Important Reminder

All persons who have received a Conference Center Questionnaire and bave not sent it in, please do so. All questionnaires should be returned to Dr. Harvey G. Williamson, Project Coordinator, Louisiana Conference Center, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Faith Development Workshop Set For March 3-6

Where are you in your faith journey? How do persons at different stages of faith development best communicate? What factors influence the maturing of faith? These are the questions to be explored at the 4-day "Mapping Adult Faith Journeys" workshop to be led by Dr. Kenneth Stokes at the Dominican Conference Center in New Orleans next month.

The workshop is an eccumenical event initiated by our conference's Board of Discipleship Education Committee. Committee chairperson Lylln Craig, Director of Children's Ministries at the Munholland Church in the New Orleans district, is serving as workshop coordinator. She said that Dr. Stokes was encouraged to offer this program in our conference upon the recommendation of persons from our conference who had attended one of his workshops in another state.

The emphasis of "Mapping Adult Faith Journeys" will be "on practical application for pastors, counselors, and others in the helping professions," according to Stokes. Theory on faith development, personality type, and adult development will be considered. These theories then will be applied to program planning for adults in local congregations.

Dr. Stokes is the executive director of ADULT FAITH RESOURCES in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is an ordained United Church of Christ minister who served in the local pastorate for 20 years, founding churches in Montana, Illinois, and Florida. In addition, he serves on the faculty of the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity in St. Paul, Minnesota, and has written numerous articles and a book, **Faith is a Verb.**

Leading the New Orleans workshop with Dr. Stokes are three of his colleagues: Dr. Richard Bradley, Lutheran Campus Pastor and Lecturer at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio; Dr. Gwen Bradley, Associate Professor of Human Development and Group Dynamics at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Columbus; and Dr. Nancy Foltz, consultant, writer and teacher in the field of Religious Education.

ADULT FAITH RESOURCES is a nonprofit organization which continues and presents research done through the "Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle Project" sponsored by the Religious Education Association of the United States and Canada and 22 other religious and educational organizations from 1981 through 1987.

Flyers promoting the faith development workshop in New Orleans March 3-6, 1991, were sent in the last two Coordinated Mailing packets. The registration form is printed on these flyers. Cost for registration is $225.00. Expenses for room and board at the Dominican Center are additional. If you need more information, or another flyer, contact Mrs. Craig, 504-834-9910, or the Reverend Karen Davis, 504-346-1646.

To All United Methodists Around the World

The Executive Committee of your Council of Bishops, meeting in Chicago, Illinois on January 22-23, 1991, calls upon all United Methodists world-wide to join with the Council in an intense period of prayer and fasting for the current military crisis in the Persian Gulf from now until the war is ended.

Since **The Gathering** in Fort Worth, Texas early in November 1990, your bishops have been following the devotional style of John Wesley by daily prayer, and fasting until 3:00 p.m. every Friday on behalf of more vital congregations and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ within our church.

We urge all United Methodists now to unite with us in broadening this concern to include:

1. The hope that the fighting may be concluded at an early date, so that families and loved ones may be reunited around the world;
2. The hope that the war may be ended with a minimum of human suffering and loss of life on both sides;
3. The hope that escalation into other areas of the world may be avoided;
4. The hope that the United Nations may emerge as a viable and respected institution to maintain a just world order;
5. The hope that people of faith throughout the world may resist calling upon God to support the concept of a "Holy War" on either side in the conflict;
6. The hope that United Methodist people, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, may practice loving our enemies in this situation;
7. The hope that God's Shalom may come on Earth as it is in Heaven.

The Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church
Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp, President

To All Louisiana Annual Conference Insurance Subscribers

This is to notify you that all medical and dental invoices incurred during 1990 must be sent to the insurance company no later than March 31, 1991, in order to be eligible for the benefits. The invoices should be mailed to the following address:

Employee Benefit Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 51005
Shreveport, LA 71135-1005

Notice to Choir Directors

Many of you have been told of a delay on some of the music for The Louisiana Gathering. The Watson Music Company explains that due to the large quantity of copies required, the publisher has had to reprint its stock. The copies are to be delivered to those who have placed orders by the first week of February. The Watson Music Company apologized for the delay. If you have not received music by February 7, please contact the Conference Office (504/346-1646).

Tax Seminar Scheduled

Sponsored by the Conference Office of Financial Affairs, a seminar offered February 19 at University UMC in Baton Rouge will prepare UM clergy and church administrators for filing their 1990 federal income tax returns.

The 10 a.m.-3 p.m. event will clarify how the current tax laws relate to denominational policies. A Cokesbury Seminars' presentation, it applies both to clergy who prepare their own returns and those who obtain assistance. In addition to reducing "April apprehension" as the 1991 filing deadline approaches, the seminary will enable persons to be prepared for future taxes as their incomes change. Also, the seminar will explain how the current tax laws interact with denominational policies and will instill an awareness for adequate record keeping and planning.

A certified public accountant will lead the "Clergy Income Tax Seminar." Participants will receive the **Abingdon Clergy Income Tax Guide,** 1991 Edition, along with other materials.

Materials are included in the $30 cost. Lunch may be purchased at the church. Those interested may register with Dr. James J. Caraway, Director of Administration/Finance at 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; (504) 346-1646.

Important Notice for Annual Conference

Any church, through its Administrative Board or Administrative Council, any District Council, any Annual Conference unit, and any individual has a right to develop and submit a petition to the Annual Conference.

A petition must first be presented to the Committee on Petitions no later than seven (7) days prior to the opening session of the Annual Conference. The Committee will meet to review the petitions it bas received and assign them to the proper body for consideration by them when they meet on the opening day of Annual Conference. Petitions need to be typed on one sheet of paper and submitted to the chairperson of the Committee on Petitions, the Reverend Larry D. Norman, P.O. Box 1210, Many, LA 71449. Be sure to sign your petition, indicating the group submitting it, or the local church membership, or an individual.

It would be helpful if a copy of each petition could be sent to the Secretary of the Annual Conference, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720.

The Annual Conference looks forward to your constructive contributions to this year's session.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PETITIONS TO THE 1992 GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FROM ANNUAL, CENTRAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCES

1. "Each petition must address only one paragraph of the Discipline or, if the Discipline is not affected, one issue." (¶608.2)
2. Be succinct; say what is necessary in as few words as possible.
3. Check petitions for accuracy in spelling, terminology and punctuation.
4. Petitions must be typed, double-spaced.
5. For Disciplinary material, indicate proposed addition by double underlining and proposed deletion by single underlining.
6. The same petition sent in quantity is wasted effort and money. Only the first received will be processed, although all will be recorded and kept on file.
7. "Each petition" approved by a Conference "must be signed" by the Secretary and/or President/Bishop. (¶608.3)
8. Three copies of each petition are to be sent to the Petitions Secretary (¶608.1)
9. "All petitions submitted to the General Conference, except those submitted by individual members of The United Methodist Church and local church groups, which call for the establishment of new programs or the expansion of existing programs, will be invalid unless accompanied by supporting data which addresses the issue of anticipated financial requirements of the program." (¶608.4)
10. "Petitions must be postmarked by a national postal service no later than sixty days prior to the opening session of the General Conference." (¶608.5) This date is March 6, 1992.
11. "If petitions are transmitted by a means other than a national postal service, they must be in the hands of the petitions secretary no later than forty-five days prior to the opening session of the General Conference." (¶608.6) This date is March 21, 1992.
12. Any petitions for 1992 General Conference that are to be sent by action of the Louisiana Annual Conference must be acted upon at tbe 1991 session of the Annual Conference (June 3-6, 1991). Such petitions must be submitted through the Conference Committee on Petitions under our normal Conference rules (received 7 days prior to the opening of the Annual Conference session). Send directly to the cbairperson of the Committee on Petitions, the Reverend Larry Norman, P.O. Box 1210, Many, LA 71449. If your petition is submitted first to the Annual Conference and the Annual Conference does not concur, you may still submit it directly to the General Conference.
13. Petitions Secretary is: Ms. Odell Thompson, 1740 Sixth Street, Beloit, WI 53511, (608) 362-8444.

DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY

February 14-16, 1991

The Embassy Suites, where the training seminar is to be held, has changed its name to STERLING SUITES. The address is 4914 Constitution Avenue. Take the College Drive exit off Interstate 10. Turn right on College Drive if traveling east, left if traveling west. Turn left on Constitution Avenue.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

'Moral discourse' in church: Yes!

Do these comments sound familiar?

"Discussion of tough moral issues only divides congregations."

"Christians should be giving answers, not raising more questions."

"Social concerns aren't spiritual; they detract from the church's primary business of saving souls."

A prominent Christian ethicist suggests that warnings such as these often are used to discourage congregations from tackling troubling spiritual and moral dilemmas.

"Some people still question whether the church is the proper place for discussion of controversial moral issues," according to the Rev. J. Philip Wogaman ("Making Moral Decisions," Nashville: Abingdon, 1990).

We agree with Dr. Wogaman's assessment: Such misgivings are unwarranted.

Rather, as he points out, congregations that regularly engage in "moral discourse"—dialogue about spiritual and moral dilemmas in light of Christian teachings—tend to be more spiritually healthy and unified than those that do not.

In fact, we believe that congregations which promote such discussion among members and in their communities can make a potent Christian witness. That's particularly so as Christian principles are brought to bear on public policy considerations.

Various "signs of the times" dramatize the urgency of applying Dr. Wogaman's wisdom in our churches.

Here are just a few of the most excruciating examples:

■ **War in the Persian Gulf.** Diverse perspectives on the war's morality, combined with the fact that many congregations have a direct interest in the war via the involvement of members and friends, make this a literal life-and-death matter for large numbers of Christians.

■ **"Right-to-die" issues.** The recent court-permitted death of a comatose Nancy Cruzan and the use last year by a Washington woman of a controversial "suicide machine" highlighted a dilemma that faces large numbers of people: When, if ever, may Christians agree to assisting in a loved one's death?

■ **Human sexuality.** Concern about the use and misuse of God's gift of sexuality—the reduction of humans to mere "sex objects," the spread of venereal disease, struggles over the moral and spiritual status of homosexuality, etc.—wracks countless Christian families.

Unlike this participant in a congregational discussion, some people question whether the church is the proper place for talking about controversial moral issues. Such misgivings are unwarranted.

As followers of One who courageously confronted such painful human dilemmas, we should exhibit a similar courage in both our personal and corporate lives.

Suggested first steps:

✓ Be willing to engage other Christians in open dialogue on perplexing and often soul-searing matters of faith and morality.

✓ Promote such dialogue within congregations via bold preaching and regular study groups that grapple with critical contemporary issues in light of biblical teachings and Christian tradition.

FaithLine

Readers debate 'core issue' in Mideast for Christians

The Reporter recently invited readers to tell what they believe is the "core issue" in the Persian Gulf war for Christians (see UMR FaithLine, Jan. 25). Here is a sampling of your responses:

Clara Lou Humphry, Lakewood, Co.: I believe that the main issue for Christians in the Middle East war is to communicate to our leaders the importance of alternatives to war. I think that the reason that we are over there is so that we can test our missiles, so that we can get new funding which Congress refused and so that we can find markets for more of our military things. I don't think it has anything to do with oil and I don't think it has anything to do with beliefs.

* * *

Emory Burton, Dallas, Texas: I believe this crisis poses a major challenge to the church. I think the war contradicts the spirit and teachings of the Scriptures, particularly Matthew 5. I think it contradicts the Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church. And, I think war has a brutalizing effect on people, promotes deceit and tends to destabilize the region in which it occurs.

* * *

Jim Landsam, Wichita, Kan.: What decent, moral person would stand aside and allow even a stranger to be raped. Turning the other cheek does not allow one the luxury of turning away from the defense of another who has had both cheeks bloodied by a rampaging bully. . . . The present Persian Gulf issue simply had to be and is being addressed by the world community. Now when this issue is disposed of, the true future of the new world order will be tested by the manner in which the world community addresses the long-standing rape of the Palestinians which is the festering sore which has been eating at the core of the Middle East since 1967.

* * *

Wendy Drisdale, Middletown, R. I.: Treating others as you would want to be treated should be the issue. Starting with Saddam Hussein taking military control of an army of people and ordering the takeover of another country is certainly not treating others as you would like to be treated. As Christians we need to see the situation as having Muslim implications.

* * *

Ruth Svestka, Berwyn, Ill.: The Bible tells us "love your neighbor as yourself." And, in church we think love your neighbor as yourself means the Ethiopians that are hungry. It also means the people in Kuwait who have been raped and savaged by Saddam Hussein.

* * *

Jim Johnson, Minneapolis, Minn.: The core issue is that all nations have armies made up of generally poor civilians that are in the army to improve their life and sometimes their basic need for food. The egos of leaders in these civilian armies use these armies rather than to have true negotiations.

* * *

Anne Eyer, New Orleans, La.: We are not there for the right reasons. I think that the issues in the Middle East conflict are American capitalism and that the president is using this war as an excuse to protect our interests. As a Christian, I feel that we need to prayerfully consider how we can love all the factions in this conflict as Christ does. And, how we can reduce our own and our government's dependence on money, power and oil. We need to change into a nation of peacemakers before we destroy our entire planet.

Letters to the Editor

Accuracy of worship statistics questioned

I did a doubletake when I noticed the "United Methodist Snapshot" in the Jan. 25 Reporter informing me that 38 percent of all United Methodists attend worship at least once a week!

I would like to think that such a figure is true, but something's grossly wrong here. I have a sneaking suspicion that every UM pastor would like to have 38 percent of his/her membership in worship at least once a week. Talk about a revival!

What probably happened is that the 38 percent figure came out of the total number of UMs at the end of 1989 (8,979,139), whereas the total number in worship for the same period of time was just shy of 3.5 million which figures out to just under 38 percent.

What the 38 percent figure does NOT reveal is the number of persons counted in the overall worship figure who are not members, children, youth, visitors, etc. This simply has to be factored in to come up with a more accurate figure.

Hey, once we get 40 percent of our total membership in worship at least once a week, we can rest assured that Pentecost is either happening or not too far off!! It could, should, happen.

Robert Spencer
Lewisville, Texas

CO supported

I felt the need to write in support of UM conscientious objector Sgt. George Morse (see UMR Letters, Jan. 11 and Feb. 1). During the seven years he spent as a volunteer in the Army, we were not involved in a war of questionable motivation.

He worked those seven years as any other employee would and deserves all he has been paid. The problem arises when his conscience tells him not to participate in the current conflict. He had a choice, just as the President and congress did. He chose to follow his conscience and not participate. I support that decision.

I would also like to voice my support for Bishop Melvin G. Talbert's opposition to the Persian Gulf war and let him know there are many United Methodists who support him.

Joan Walker
Patterson, California

Peace awards in doubt

I'm sure that the citizens of the Baltic countries are wondering now about the fairness and justification in presenting the Nobel Peace Prize and the World Methodist Council's peace award to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev (see UMR, Jan. 25).

G. Benham Ross
St. Louis, Missouri

What others are saying

"I have a confession to make to United Methodist women. During my seminary student days I questioned the value of the small study books used, trivially I thought, in the various women's groups throughout the land. Then, as a graduate student, I wrote a doctoral dissertation about the racial struggle within the church. I discovered, to my surprise and delight, that the women were leading the whole church. Why? It was part *because they had learned so much while reading and discussing those study books!*"

—The Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, Christian social ethics professor and author, "Making Moral Decisions"

* * *

"The public school system is overloaded with responsibilities once assumed by family and church and this overloaded institution struggles to be relevant and effective. As a former public school board member, I am still convinced that there is nothing wrong with public schools that families and congregations cannot cure."

—United Methodist Bishop Bruce P. Blake, Dallas Area

My Witness

I was thrilled by religious vitality in U.S.S.R.

By BILL McKIBBEN

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaninglul experiences ol the Christian lile. Bill McKibben lives in Johnsburg, N.Y., and is a member of Johnsburg United Methodist Church (Troy Annual Conlerence).

Any reader may submit an article lor consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

In the bare dirt dooryard, between the well and the potato patch, attended by a fussing chicken, an old man knelt, made a small twig fire, and poured a libation of vodka on the flames.

He was a shaman, a "medicine man" of the ancient and indigenous religious tradition of Siberia.

Above him stood an old but sturdy widow, hostess this day to her dear friend the shaman, who was from the next village. A Georgian emigre, she was as fair and European as he was dark and Asian.

She clutched a holy card—a paper icon —and crossed herself as in a fervor. When each had finished praying, they embraced and went inside and ate.

I was in a remote part of Siberia recently to work with local officials on environmental planning. Like much else in the Soviet Union, the environment is in crisis. But that isn't news.

Religion booming

What was news to me—good news—was the boom in religious enthusiasm, and, at least in this corner of the country, religious tolerance.

No Moslems killing Christians for killing Moslems; no flaring anti-Semitism, no ethnic outrages. Instead, three great religions emerging slowly from the 70-year Bolshevik winter.

The shamanistic tradition is oldest by far. Those who study such things consider the region around Lake Baikal to be one of the world's few cradles of religion. The shamans were thought to be in direct contact with the gods, privy to knowledge of where to hunt and how to heal.

They heal still, and with a vengeance. My wife and I weren't particularly ill, since we were among the first Americans to visit these towns, nothing would do but that we be cured—by, among other things, the warm breath of an old man who had just licked a red hot piece of iron.

Old monks chanting

The next religion to reach the area was Buddhism, which slowly infiltrated north from Mongolia. The Soviet Union's largest monastery is in the Buryat Republic, south of Baikal—a grand and joyful place, its wooden main hall echoing with the chanting of old monks and the steady beat of a drum.

A thousand Buddha images look down on the monks; outside, pilgrims circle the temple, turning the prayer wheels to offer automatic beseechings.

This was a gentle and syncretic Buddhism; it merged with much of the best of the shamanistic tradition it found on its arrival. One day on the shore of Baikal we came to a sacred place, where travelers for as long as there have been travelers have torn small strips off their clothing and tied them to the trees.

There we found a crew-cut, red-robed Buddhist monk chanting a long prayer. At its conclusion we learned it was not some Tibetan antiquity, but instead a list of all 336 tributaries that fed into the lake.

If this is paganism, it's paganism of a high order—a strong sense of the land's holiness has done much to save the Baikal area from the ravages of much of the Soviet Union. (Even the remaining communist party officials call it "sacred Baikal.")

Cathedrals were gutted

The third tradition, Russian Orthodox Christianity, suffered most of all, perhaps, under communist rule. Many towns we drove through had gutted cathedrals; in Ulan Ude, a city of 400,000, only one church was open, and that had happened just two years before.

But its pastor, young Father Andrei, was doing a boom business in baptisms, as all those born during the last seven decades suddenly found themselves free to confess their faith.

I stood in a tiny steaming room in a distant village and watched him baptize 20 one morning, dunking their heads three times apiece in a bucket of cold lake water.

Father Andrei had felt the power of the KGB, even in its waning days. For several years they had blocked his installation as a parish priest, so he had worked instead as the night watchman at an Orthodox cemetery, lovingly tending the long-neglected graves.

His earnestness, though, did not wipe away his Russianness. The night of our departure, at a noisy party, he and the Buddhist lama were drinking happy toasts. The lama sticks his ring finger into the glass, because the ring finger does not harm, and then flicks the vodka east, west, north and south.

That vision sticks in my mind, and also the picture of the old shaman pouring *his* vodka on his guttering flames.

In this comer of the Soviet Union, religion and tolerance were not only alive but healthy. And as badly as the Siberians needed Western contact and aid, it seemed to me they had a good deal to offer in return.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And he said to them, 'Take heed what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you.' " (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Psalms 100:2)

Readings for week of Feb. 11

Monday: Psalms 50:1-6
Tuesday: Psalms 50:7-15
Wednesday: 2 Kings 2:1-12a
Thursday: Mark 9:2-9
Friday: Mark 9:14-29
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 4:1-2
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

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Faith watch

BUSH CITES UMS: President Bush last week named the United Methodist Urban Ministries of Clarksville, Tenn., as the 367th "Daily Point of Light." The ministry involves local churches in providing services such as victims assistance, a safehouse for abuse victims and crisis referrals. The president six days a week recognizes "points of light"—people or organizations that "successfully address our most pressing social problems through direct and consequential acts of community service."

ASSEMBLY GOES FORWARD: World Council of Churches General Secretary the Rev. Emilio Castro said the council's Seventh Assembly slated for Feb. 7-20 in Canberra, Australia, will go forward despite the gulf war. The international body was asked by one national delegation that the assembly be postponed as an "act of solidarity with the suffering people in the region." Dr. Castro, a Methodist clergyman from Uruguay, said a decision to proceed was reached after consultations with Middle East church leaders as a way of reinforcing the "peace testimony" of the churches and of articulating "the Christian solidarity with the people of the Middle East." He said steps are under way "to provide a space within the assembly to take account of this particular crisis and to join hands in our common witness." More than 65 United Methodists will be among the 3,500 assembly participants.

Emilio Castro

PHILIPPINES PROTEST: Iraqi students at a United Methodist-related university in the Philippines have protested that country's support of the U.N.-sanctioned multinational forces attempting to eject Iraq from occupied Kuwait. Rodolfo Beltran of Cabanatuan City said that Iraqi students at the Philippine Christian University in Manila led the protest. The university is supported by the Philippine Central Conference. An attorney and United Methodist layman, Mr. Beltran serves as legal counsel to another United Methodist-related college, Wesleyan University in Cabanatuan City. He said the unrest has not spread to that school. The Philippines has sent medical teams to support troops in the Persian Gulf War.

PRAYER SPOTS: Vision Interfaith Satellite Network, or VISN, a 24-hour interfaith cable TV network, began running a series of 30- and 60-second "Prayers for Peace" spots featuring Islamic, Christian, Jewish and Orthodox leaders two days after the conflict in the Persian Gulf erupted. "VISN feels it can make its best contribution by being a place for reflection and prayer leading for action and peace," said Jeffrey Weber, an executive vice president of the cable network, in a statement issued Jan. 23.

AYATOLLAH SILENT: Saddam Hussein says Iraq is in a "holy war." But, Muslim authorities say the only man who could legitimately make such a declaration, Grand Ayatollah Abolghassen Khoi, is silent, as he was in the war with Iran. Islamic scholars in the United States say both wars pitted Muslim against Muslim. Bruce Lawrence, head of comparative Islamic studies at Duke University, cited another reason. "Saddam Hussein has already killed many of the independent Muslim figures in Iraq," he said. "The only way Khoi can remain independent without being killed is to keep quiet."

'TRIPLE JEOPARDY' FILED: For the third time, the Rev. Daniel Bruch, a professor at Concordia College in St. Paul, Minn., faces false doctrine charges allegedly for supporting female ordination against the policies of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. "It's a kind of triple jeopardy," Dr. Bruch said as he noted the charges were "identical" to the first two times.

Mother laments losing 'youngest and best'

Small South Carolina black UM 3-point charge sends 9 members to Persian Gulf war

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Witness amid War

Just before Nero Priester graduated from Allendale-Fairfax County high school in South Carolina, in 1989, he decided to accept the U.S. Army's call to "be all that he could be."

Being accepted for admission at Georgia Southern College in Statesboro and asked to play on the school's basketball team was not enough for him.

He wanted to learn some new skills before entering college and wanted to help support his divorced mother. So that summer he joined the Army reserve.

Tries to 'keep faith'

Now, some 20 months later, his mother, Catherine Priester of Union United Methodist Church in Kline, S.C., tries to "keep faith" as her 19-year-old son Nero—and some 86 other men and women from her county—serve in Operation Desert Storm. Her feelings are not only that of worry, but guilt for what she may have done to her first-born child. She signed the consent papers for Nero to enlist when he was 17.

"If you want to know the truth, I honestly regret the day he asked me to sign those Army papers back in 1989," said Mrs. Priester, a specialist for at-risk children in the Allendale County Schools.

"I think it is very unfair, especially for those men and women from our county who listened to the recruiter say how they can pay for college, while learning new skills. But it was Nero's choice, and I'll always support him."

Ministering to loved ones

All over the nation, United Methodist churches are ministering to families like the Priesters distraught over loved ones serving in the Persian Gulf War.

But in Mrs. Priester's town of Allendale, S.C., tensions are particularly high in the United Methodist Central Charge. This three-point charge has nine members serving in the Persian Gulf War.

Increasing the tensions at Simpson, New Hope and Bethel United Methodist Churches in Allendale County is the sense of guilt felt by members like Catherine Priester who told loved ones that the Army had opportunities to serve their country and supplement income through a respectable job.

Extra source of income

"In rural communities, joining the National Guard or the Army reserve is an alternative to unemployment or an extra source of income," said Wilbur Cave, Allendale city manager and a member of New Hope United Methodist in Seigling, S.C.

"In a predominantly black area like Allendale County, we encourage people to join the service, because it keeps our young people from hanging around with nothing to do. And they are also gaining a skill." He said one of the military units trains water purification specialists.

Allendale County is one of the smallest in South Carolina, with a population of 11,000. It's on the Georgia/South Carolina line, some 50 miles from Augusta, Ga.

"They have taken the youngest and the best from our poor county," said Mrs. Priester. "All the men who were about doing something for their families are all gone—and at least 80 percent of all those people are black."

She told the Reporter how eager she is for Nero to return to college, and complete his studies in criminal justice. He was called to active duty just two weeks before starting his second year of college classes last August.

To help ease the stress of waiting for her son's return, Mrs. Priester works with her pastor, the Rev. Harrison D. Ervin, in developing support ministries for other military-related families.

The mother said Nero has always been a great communicator with other youth. At Union Church, he was a member of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship, and a junior usher.

Involved with new ministry

Just before Nero left for Saudi Arabia, he was involved with a new ministry called "the fifth Sunday youth service."

"For the second worship service, my Nero was asked to speak, and I was pretty proud," she said. His sermon topic was "The Power of Love."

Recent national newspaper polls indicate that blacks across the country are evenly split on the issue of the Persian Gulf War. One reason for the mixed feelings, say many black leaders, is that blacks compose 21 percent of the armed services, but only 12 percent of the U.S. population.

The Pentagon reports that blacks make up some 30 percent of the ground troops. And at least half the women serving in Operation Desert Storm are black.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ALLENDALE CITIZEN LEADER

ALLENDALE, S.C.—Some 1,000 persons stood in front of the Allendale County courthouse last August to bid farewell to South Carolina's first National Guard unit called to active duty. Now there are four National Guard or U.S. Army units from that county serving in the Persian Gulf. United Methodists are taking an active role in ministering to the families the troops left behind.

Bishops call for prayer, fasting

United Methodist News Service

United Methodists worldwide are being called to "an intense period of prayer and fasting for the current military crisis in the Persian Gulf from now until the war is ended."

The call was issued Jan. 23 by the Executive Committee of the United Methodist Council of Bishops in a statement released by Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp of Indianapolis, president of the Council of Bishops.

The complete text of the statement reads:

"To All United Methodists Around the World:

"The Executive Committee of your Council of Bishops, meeting in Chicago, Ill., on Jan. 22-23, calls upon all United Methodists worldwide to join with the council in an intense period of prayer and fasting for the current military crisis in the Persian Gulf from now until the war is ended.

"Since 'The Gathering' in Fort Worth, Texas, early in November 1990, your bishops have been following the devotional style of John Wesley by daily prayer, and fasting until 3 p.m. every Friday on behalf of more vital congregations and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ within our church.

"We urge all United Methodists now to unite with us in broadening this concern to include:

"1. The hope that the fighting may be concluded at an early date, so that families and loved ones may be reunited around the world;

"2. The hope that the war may be ended with a minimum of human suffering and loss of life on both sides;

"3. The hope that escalation into other areas of the world may be avoided;

"4. The hope that the United Nations may emerge as a viable and respected institution to maintain a just world order;

"5. The hope that people of faith throughout the world may resist calling upon God to support the concept of a 'Holy War' on either side in the conflict;

"6. The hope that United Methodist people, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, may practice loving our enemies in this situation;

"7. The hope that God's Shalom may come on Earth as it is in Heaven."

Is tough moral discourse too meaty for TV?

By PATRICIA LEFEVERE

NEW YORK—Moral discourse does not lend itself well to quick television "soundbites."

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell knows that firsthand.

Thus, that's why Americans have seen "such a clean Nintendo War in the Gulf rather than a debate about what this war is doing to our nation," said the general secretary-elect of the National Council of Churches (NCC).

Serious moral questions—about the carpet bombing of Iraqi soldiers in the desert, about massive air strikes against Baghdad and Basra, about food and milk shortages in Iraqi cities, about refugees fleeing to church camps in Jordan and reporting the bombing of civilian areas and civilian casualties—have hardly been aired, she said.

But Dr. Campbell, 59, a mother and grandmother, is demanding discussion of the morality of those issues. (See related editorial on Page 2.)

Within hours of war's outbreak, she could be heard pressing moral issues on the "McNeil-Lehrer News Hour," "The Today Show" and Ted Koppel's Nightline."

"I was not chosen merely to administrate," said Dr. Campbell, who sees the job she'll assume in March as like that of a rabbi or teacher.

Currently she directs the U.S. office of the World Council of Churches and this month is leading the U.S. delegation to the WCC's world assembly in Canberra, Australia (see related FaithWatch item on this page).

Under no illusions about the challenge the world faces from Saddam Hussein, she described her recent meetings with the No. 3 man and other high officials in the Iraqi regime as "absolutely chilling."

Yet Mr. Hussein's ruthlessness "still does not justify the massive air power we're pouring over Iraq," she said in a recent interview.

Dr. Campbell said, "I believe that when at the top level the response to human conflict is one of violence—and military action is violent—then this has its trickle-down effect in our society."

A rising toll of murders, muggings and crimes against women and children have brought many to the point of "despair over our violent society," she said.

Dr. Campbell believes that church leaders must question the "moral dilemma" that such a situation produces in our youth.

Similarly, they must ask why we have "seemingly endless money to spend on this war, but insufficient funds for health care or to fight homelessness, poverty or drugs."

Liberians are forgotten, relief officials say

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

CHARLESTON, S.C.—The war in the Persian Gulf may be the top media story of the day, but don't forget the needs of Liberia, say officials of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

In her final report to the elected directors and staff of UMCOR, Dr. Norma J. Kehrberg, chief executive, urged the group to continue to "care for suffering, uprooted people" like those in Liberia, and "to be caretakers of a desperate ministry in the United Methodist Church."

The United Methodist mission board's relief agency was in Charleston, S.C., during its winter meeting Jan. 24-27.

Lack of support noted

"We have noted with some concern the lack of spontaneous support for the Bishops' Appeals, particularly for Liberia," said Dr. Kehrberg.

> ***"We have noted with some concern the lack of spontaneous support for the Bishops' Appeals, particularly for Liberia."***
>
> **—Norma Kehrberg**

"However, more than anything else, I am convinced it is because there has been virtually no news coverage of the Liberian situation in the U.S. press."

Liberia has been in a civil war since Christmas eve, 1989. This has left some 750,000 refugees in surrounding countries and massive displacement wihin the West African country. Liberians are experiencing malnutrition, suffering and thousands of deaths.

Under extreme conditions, the United Methodist Liberia Annual Conference has continued to minister to the needs of its people. Bishop Arthur Kulah of Monrovia has spoken in this country about his near-death escape. But despite the pleas for help, United Methodists have only contributed $84,031.17, as of December, 1990.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The United Methodist Bishops' Appeal for Liberia is Advance No. 150300-7.)

Although she is scheduled to leave her post for a mission appointment in Nepal on Feb. 7, Dr. Kehrberg said the UMCOR staff is committed to giving regular updates on the needs of fellow United Methodist in Liberia.

Site visit scheduled

A site visit to Liberia was scheduled for Feb. 4-12 by UMCOR staffers the Rev. R. Dean Hancock and Lloyd Rollins. They were scheduled to assess development needs and potential living conditions for returning missionaries, and to determine how United Methodists can continue to respond.

Dr. Kehrberg asked for United Methodists to pray for all the UM medical teams. Added to the list is Loretta Gruver, a nurse from Indiana, who will work with Medecins Sans Frontiers, a Belgian medical organization.

"While UMCOR has responded to the needs of refugees who have fled to neighboring countries, we have also been responsive to those who made their way to the U.S.," said Lilia Fernandez, UMCOR secretary for refugee concerns.

Emergency assistance is available for those Liberians through the agency, in partnership with local churches.

Ms. Fernandez added that advocacy is needed to pressure the attorney general to make Liberians eligible for Safe Haven, a general program that gives authorization to work in the United States, and to persuade Congress and the state department to process Liberians who qualify for U.S. resettlement.

More news on actions taken by the United Methodist Committee on Relief will appear in future issues of the Reporter.

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Faith connections

ISSUES DEBATED: Spiritual leadership in the United Methodist Church into the next century was examined at an issues forum Jan. 17-19 in Atlanta. Some of the 90 persons taking part urged fellow church leaders to contend with problems that hamper vital leadership—such as debate about equal salaries for pastors, tensions between lay and clergy, and church structures—before moving into the 21st century. The issues forum was the first in a series sponsored by the denomination's General Council on Ministries.

WOMEN ASKED TO PRAY: United Methodist Women have been asked by their top leaders to set aside a time each Tuesday to pray for peace in the Persian Gulf. A statement signed by Joyce D. Sohl, chief staff executive of the Board of Global Ministries Women's Division, and Sally Ernst of Bethel Park, Pa., national president of United Methodist Women, said, "We have seen women suffer in war as fathers, husbands, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters are killed. . . . It is time to stop the suffering."

NAME CHANGE: The new national council of a caucus of United Methodists for gay and lesbian concerns has changed its organization's name. The caucus will be known now as "Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns." Council members said the change reflects the "ministry and witness of bisexual persons already active within the organization." The council also named Gloria Soliz of San Francisco and Morris Floyd of Minneapolis as its national spokespeople.

RETIRING: The Rev. Donald A. Webb, president of United Methodist-related Centenary College in Shreveport, La., for 14 years, will retire June 1.

MEMBERS RESIGN: Two members of the 27-member United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality resigned as of the panel's Jan. 31-Feb. 3 meeting in St. Louis. The Rev. James Logan, professor of evangelism at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, cited recent health problems. Dr. Stanley Hauwerwas, professor of ethics at Duke University in Durham, N.C., cited additional duties at the university. Because the committee is only one meeting away from submitting its report to the General Council on Ministries, the two scholars are not likely to be replaced, said the Rev. Nancy Yamasaki of Spokane, Wash., committee chair.

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'We've never had this many older women'

Gerontologist calls UMs to prepare for rising numbers of single, older women in church

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

FORT WORTH—The United Methodist Church is an aging church, experts tell us.

And as the average age of congregations increases, the number of older women who are alone—either widowed, divorced or never married—also increases, according to Atlanta gerontologist Barbara Pittard Payne.

Yet the church isn't ready for the onslaught of older single women which, by the year 2010, will make up a disproportionate number of the 77 million adults over 65, Dr. Payne recently told participants at the United Methodist National Convocation on Older Adult Ministries.

Dr. Payne directed a workshop on the special concerns of older women. Attending the workshop were leaders of older adult ministries in their home conferences or congregations.

They outlive their mates

A major concern is that most married women in the U.S. today can expect to outlive their mates by 8 to 18 years, the 70-year-old United Methodist told the group.

Seventy-five percent of women over 85 are single, she said.

"We've never had this many single, older women in the history of the church," she said. And, since the fastest growing group in the population today is over 85, the number in the church will continue to grow, she added.

How well they survive depends on their attitude and prior planning, Dr. Payne continued.

"We have to learn how to be widowed, how not to be destroyed by it."

Loneliness, the problems of living alone, even homelessness are issues that must be addressed by the church and by the women themselves, she said.

A warm, caring congregation can make a big difference in the lives of these women, she said.

"The church is even more important when you are single," Dr. Payne said, "because as a member you have worth."

Many are poor

Older women who live alone are likely to be poor, Dr. Payne continued. Currently one-third of those who live alone are below the poverty line, and nearly 15 percent of all women over age 65 are poor.

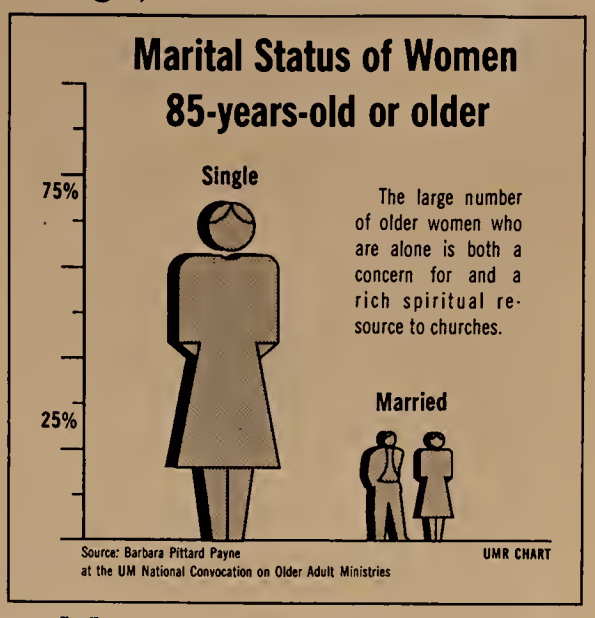
Other major issues for older women are physical and mental health care, a sense of self worth and a need for meaningful purpose in life.

Dr. Payne urged that older women stay in charge and make their own decisions.

In addition, "We have to be prepared for dying," she said. "Why is it death and dying is never mentioned from the pulpit except at Easter?

"And we need to discuss with our families what we want and don't want" in the way of life-sustaining technology.

Pastoral counseling in these life- and-death issues can be extremely helpful to families, she said, and possibly save them a great deal of pain later on.



Europe meeting becomes 'casualty' of Mideast war

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

ST. LOUIS—Plans to visit United Methodists in Europe, Africa and the Philippines have become a casualty of the Persian Gulf War—for now.

The executive committee of the General Council on Ministries—the agency that coordinates activities of the denomination's program boards—has postponed its plans for a spring trip to sites on three continents and to U.S. Native American sites. The trips were to culminate in the agency's spring meeting in Zurich, Switzerland (see UMR, Jan. 18).

"With much pain," as the Rev. Sharon Z. Rader, committee member, termed it, the executive committee voted overwhelmingly to postpone the planned visits.

Instead the council's directors will meet in April in the United States on dates and at a site yet to be determined.

C. David Lundquist, chief executive of the coordinating agency, noted that because of the last-minute change in plans, arrangements for an April meeting will be difficult to make.

Meanwhile, directors of the coordinating agency stressed that their plans to visit United Methodists outside the United States are delayed, not cancelled.

The venture had been proposed in response to a self-generated question under which the council operates: "What does it mean to be a global church?"

Directors pledged to keep talking with United Methodist bishops and congregations in Europe, Africa and the Philippines in their efforts to demonstrate the "vision of global connectedness" of the United Methodist Church.

Mr. Lundquist and Bishop Felton E. May, council president, said they had been in touch with Filipino and European United Methodist bishops regarding the possibility that the visits would be delayed. Contacts with African bishops are still being arranged.

Chief among several reasons given by the executive committee for delaying the visits was the "inappropriateness of the timing of travel in light of the world situation."

Older women said to be 'rich spiritual resources'

Women age 65 and older are "great advisors and memory banks often ignored" in the church, said aging specialist Barbara Pittard Payne (see related article above.)

Dr. Payne also sees older women as a rich spiritual resource for churches.

Dr. Payne suggested that many aging women can serve as Sunday school teachers and as mentors to church members who are seeking spiritual growth.

They may also offer spiritual strength to members who are hospitalized, homebound or undergoing a crisis, she said.

In addition, they can be helpful in a number of arenas of church life.

For example, she said, they can chair major committees and augment the work of the paid church staff. At times they are the church staff.

These women can take their experiences and use them for new and creative purposes, she said.

Older people need to be involved in significant things, she said, and they have the time to devote to them. Even those who are physically bedridden can help meet the needs of others through telephoning or writing letters or cards.

"There is a call for this third part of life," the 70-year-old gerontologist said. "We can live a vital Christian life at whatever age we find ourselves."

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

'Historic' appointment may be first across regional lines

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A Missouri East United Methodist minister has crossed jurisdictional lines to be appointed the first black district superintendent for the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference.

In what Western Pennsylvania United Methodists termed "an historic appointment," Bishop George Bashore (Pittsburgh Area) has named the Rev. J. LaVon Kincaid Sr., 48, of St. Louis as Pittsburgh-East District Superintendent.

He is currently associate director of the Missouri East Annual Conference's Council on Ministries.

The Rev. J. LaVon Kincaid

'May be first since 1968'

Retired Bishop James S. Thomas of Dallas told the Reporter that "this appointment is a rarity, in that it may be the first time since the dissolution of the segregated Central Jurisdiction in 1968 that a black district superintendent was appointed across jurisdictional lines."

In 1989, elected delegates to the annual conference—composed of 1,600 lay and clergy—adopted a comprehensive plan for developing and strengthening the ethnic minority local church.

The body recommended that "the bishop and cabinet actively pursue the employment of ethnic minority persons to the cabinet."

The more important issue

Bishop W.T. Handy (Missouri Area) said the appointment has caused a few problems for him, but the more important issue was to work with Bishop Bashore in making the appointment.

"We were trying to work in the best interest of the church," he said. "LaVon had been rendering effective service in his present appointment, but we thought the new appointment would be significant in the life of the church.

"One thing about the United Methodist Church is that we are a connectional church. We see this appointment in broader terms than the annual conference."

In a telephone interview with the Reporter, Dr. Kincaid said the decision to accept appointment as a district superintendent across jurisdictional and annual conference lines was for the purpose of inclusion.

Presently black United Methodists make up some 1,050 of the Western Pennsylvania area's 220,000 United Methodists.

Dr. Kincaid said Bishop Bashore had been familiar with his ministry since the early 1980s when Bishop Bashore was an elected official of the church's General Board of Discipleship and Dr. Kincaid was the board's stewardship director.

"What Bishop Bashore did can serve as a model for our denomination," Dr. Kincaid said.

"If more churches do what they say they want to do, I think we can be a prophetic church."

Postal increase hits local churches and other non-profit mailers hard

Non-profit organizations—including local congregations and the United Methodist Reporter—are being hit hard by substantial increases in postal rates enacted Feb. 3 by the U.S. Postal Service.

While most postal customers are now familiar with the rise of a first-class stamp from 25 to 29 cents each, few are aware of corresponding increases in other postal rates.

Steepest boosts are in third class, non-profit rates used by many local churches for newsletters. Anthony M. Frank, postmaster general, characterized these increases as "massive" at a Jan. 22 news conference announcing the new rates.

31 percent increase

The rate for second-class mail—the category under which the Reporter and other news publications are distributed—increased by 31 percent.

The Reporter's Editor and Chief Executive, the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, said the newspaper had no choice but to pass through the increases, which translate to 2.5 cents per copy to its annual conference and local church subscribers.

> ***There is 'little doubt that some church publications may be forced out of business.'***
> **—Daniel J. Louis**

The rate increase will add approximately a $500,000 addition to the newspaper's $1.75 million postage budget for 1991. The Reporter mails nearly 500,000 newspapers during a typical week.

Leaders notified

Pastors, bishops, and conference leaders were notified last week by letter of the pass-through increase which takes effect with the Feb. 8 issue.

Even so, the letter noted, the Reporter will experience a $40,000 cash flow loss since postage must be paid when mail is deposited and reimbursement is not received until the following month.

The Reporter's General Manager, the Rev. Daniel J. Louis Jr., said the Reporter staff is investigating "taking advantage of any discounts built into the postal rates."

Editors of other United Methodist publications indicated to United Methodist News Service that they, too, will be hard hit by the postage increases.

Postal costs for The Interpreter magazine, produced by United Methodist Communications and mailed third class, will increase by 48.8 percent according to its publisher, the Rev. Donald Collier of Nashville.

Mr. Louis also said he has "little doubt that some church publications may be forced out of business."

While lamenting the adverse effects the latest round of postal rate increases will have on non-profit organizations, Dr. Dunnam said there is no option but to pay if one is going to communicate through the mail.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
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William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
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Come Holy Spirit, Renew The Whole Creation!

I am writing this on Saturday, February 2, the day before Marilyn and I leave for Australia for the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

The two-week meeting will be in Canberra, the national capitol. There, 1,000 delegates and 2,500 designated visitors, daily visitors and guests will study the Bible, hear papers and sermons, debate issues and affirm the theme's "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation."

The significance of meeting in Canberra, Australia, cannot be overstated. Australia was named by a devout Portuguese mariner named Pedre de Quiros who set out to find the mythical Southern Continent, and named it (without finding it) "Austrialia del Espirito Santo," the southland of the Holy Spirit. It was Captain James Cook, an English Protestant who "discovered" Australia and took possession of the country in the name of King George III. While respectful to the native Aborigines, it never occurred to Cook that the land was not his to give.

The Aborigine's civilization was ancient in Cook's time. Their religion held that the land was sacred (it "owned" them — they did not own the land) because it was the home of their Creator. They called it the "Spirit Land."

The Aborigine Church will be the official host of the 7th Assembly and will welcome visitors to their "Spirit Land."

While I am in meetings, Marilyn will be seeing Australia. I envy her, but I also look forward to the Assembly.

William B. Oden

Louisiana Gathering is 'Pinnacle Experience' in Louisiana United Methodism

Declaring that the Louisiana Gathering will be "a pinnacle experience," Esther Socolofsky, coordinator of the worship service for the event, described the excitement and splendor that Gathering participants can expect.

Imagine, says Mrs. Socolofsky, arriving early to enjoy a picnic lunch (brought from home) by the river on Centroplex grounds surrounded by music from several outdoor bands and groups. Then imagine moving into the massive arena with ten-thousand other excited United Methodists to enjoy the celebration as the Dillard and Centenary Choirs provide a magnificent concert from 1:30 to 2 p.m.

At 2 p.m., when the service begins, you and the other congregants will witness a massive procession — led by a band — as a thousand-robed clergy join designated lay people carrying 600 banners, one for each church. This festival of banners will be placed around the galleries to provide a panoply of vivid color and religious symbols for the service.

In the center of the arena, imagine a large octagonal stage in-the-round, topped by a triangular-shaped altar whose design incorporates the symbolism of the spiritual event: living waters! Baskets especially woven by Houma Indians are usable on the altar as they sit ready to receive each church's covenant statement.

As the worship begins, let your mind see and hear two liturgical dance teams, a 2000-voice adult choir, and an 800-voice youth choir, conducted by Will Andress and Carver Davenport. Pianos, organs, brass horns, and percussive instruments that accompany the joyous singing of all ten-thousand participants also enhance your enjoyment.

Then, hear in your heart Dr. Zan Holmes and Bishop Richard Wilke preach messages that call us back to the source of our faith and send us forth to renew our commitment to our church. The service ends with a very special celebration (a surprise!) that no one wants to miss.

Then imagine the sadness afterwards of those who miss the event. The Louisiana Gathering will not be repeated for many years. Please don't let the special blessing that it promises to provide for you and the Church pass you by. As Esther concludes, "it is my dream that all United Methodists in Louisiana will make every effort to come to Baton on March 9 to experience this unique service. It will be a time of renewal and inspiration for all of us!"

Academy for Preaching II Comes to a Close

Editor's Note: The following article was written by the Reverend Kenneth M. Fisher, pastor of Bethany United Methodist Church in New Orleans.

For two years I was involved in what was perhaps the most "unique opportunity in continuing education for preaching to be found anywhere." Being one of two Louisiana Conference preachers nominated by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, confirmed by Bishop William B. Oden, and selected by the Academy to participate in this program, William Peeples (the other participant) and I have been involved in the exploration and development of our gifts as preachers.

As was indicated in an earlier article, the Academy for Preaching is a two-year learning experience in the development of our skills as preachers; offering a combination of study and travel. There were four sessions, the second taking us to Israel on a workstudy pilgrimmage. We were among a group of 100 United Methodist ministers from across the nation. This two-year program is sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville, Tennessee. Michael E. Williams, Section on Worship, is Director of the Academy.

According to the Handbook, participants are selected for the Academy due to the following requirements:

1. their commitment to the good news of what God has done for all people in Jesus Christ
2. their commitment to sharing that good news with others through preaching
3. because they have demonstrated these commitments in disciplined, faithful and imaginative preaching in local congregations
4. they have shown the promise of becoming a transformational leader of persons in their conference and across the United Methodist Church

The Reverend William D. Peeples, pastor of First United Methodist Church in West Monroe, and I will seek direction from our Conference Board of Ordained Ministry as to how our experiences can be used for the benefit of the enrichment of preaching in our conference. I have already had the pleasurable experience of being invited to teach in the South Louisiana Area School for License to Preach, which was held at Wesley United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge. The Reverend Freddie C. Henderson, pastor of Wesley, also serves as dean of the school. I recently made a commitment to continue in that role for the next two years.

On January 18, 1991, William and I graduated from the Academy for Preaching. The fourth session (Jan. 14-18), was held at the beautiful Scarritt-Bennett Center located in Nashville.

I would like to thank our Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Bishop Oden and the staff of the Academy for the vote of confidence, as well as, the financial support through scholarships. I hope that in the years to come, I can repay their trust in faithful service to the Annual Conference of Louisiana and the Church.

Local Pastors Participate

Convocation on Evangelism April 19-20

"Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., will be the inspirational speaker, and Dr. Joe Harding the keynote speaker, at a Convocation on Evangelism that will be held in Dallas, Texas April 19-20, 1991," it was announced by the office of the South Central Jurisdiction. The Convocation is a follow-up of "The Gathering — Vital Congregations and Faithful Disciples" that was held in Ft. Worth last November.

The purpose of the event is to train and motivate local church leaders about the task of evangelism. The focus will be primarily on the local church. The emphasis will be two-fold: exploring the possibilities for evangelism in VISION 2000, Growth Plus, covenant groups, church growth, Sunday School, youth groups, and preaching; and, a series of workshop sessions on Doing Evangelism in the various ethnic churches as well as small, mid-sized, large, and rural churches.

The theme for the convocation is "Celebrate and Witness — Being an Invitational Church." Two persons from the Louisiana Conference — the Reverend Brady Forman and the Reverend John Braden — will be providing leadership. Additional leaders include Dr. David Brazelton, Dr. James Cowell, the Reverend & Mrs. Nell Monhney, and the Reverend Sang E. Chun of the General Board of Discipleship; Dr. Mark Craig, Dr. Pat Day, Dr. Henry Masters, Sr., and the Reverend Joel Salas. Dr. Roberto Escamilla of San Antonio, Texas is the director. The Reverend Jimmy Pyles of the Louisiana Conference is a member of the planning committee for this event.

For additional information, or a brochure, contact the office of the South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228 (214-321-7077).

In Memoriam

The Reverend Samuel Percy Emanuel, retired minister, died December 28, 1990. Services were held Monday, December 31, at First United Methodist Church in Plaquemine. Mr. Emanuel, 75, at the time of his death, is survived by his wife, Sara, one daughter and two sons.

Ethel White, wife of a former Louisiana Conference minister, died January 20, 1991.

Rev. William J. Reid, retired minister, died January 22, 1991 at the age of 86. He is survived by his wife, Margaret A. Reid.

Dorothy J. Lankford, wife of the late Reverend Frank C. Lankford, died February 2, 1991. Mrs. Lankford was 84 at the time of her death.

UMW Conference Retreat March 1-3, 1991

"Dance of Discipleship"

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:19

The 1991 Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women's Retreat will be held at Tall Timbers Conference Center near Woodworth on March 1-3. This is the seventh biannual retreat. Since 1979, the retreat has been an outstanding eagerly awaited event for United Methodist Women.

The group is delighted to have as its retreat leader, Marilyn Brown Oden, wife of Louisiana Area Bishop William B. Oden. Mrs. Oden is well-known as an inspirational speaker, having led numerous retreats for United Methodist Women and clergy spouses. She has taught in Conference Schools of Christian Mission, in seminary classes and schools for probationary ministers and local pastors. In addition, Mrs. Oden has led Parent Effectiveness Training groups. She has endeared herself to Louisiana Methodism as she has spoken and traveled throughout the state in the new Shepherding Program and in local and district activities. She and Bishop Oden are, with great effectiveness and dedication, leading United Methodists of Louisiana into a new era of vision and discipleship.

The theme for the retreat is "Dance of Discipleship," and will include such interesting presentations as "Dancing in The Desert," "Dancing Our Identity," "Dancing with Others," "Dancing Toward God," and "Dancing Our Discipleship."

Special features will incorporate small group discussion, time for solitude, personal reflection, fellowship, and worship. The retreat will conclude with Holy Communion with the Reverend Kathy Dauphin as Celebrant. Music directors will be Tracy Carpenter of Baton Rouge and Virginia Burris of Franklinton. They are planning great music for worship and fellowship times.

Chairperson of the 1991 retreat is Janelle McCammon with Betty Ferrington as Assistant Chairperson.

Methodist Home of New Orleans and United Methodist Foundation Sign Agreement

On January 3, 1991, the Methodist Home of New Orleans and the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana signed an agreement authorizing the Foundation to manage the Home's investment funds.

The agreement was signed after meetings with the Home's officers and directors. Dr. Richard Hodges, Executive Director of the Home stated, "The Methodist Home of New Orleans is very proud to continue its strong bonds with the Foundation. This is a good faith gesture of support and we hope to continue this relationship for many years to come." Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director of the Foundation, also presented a check for $20,000 to Dr. Hodges for the purchase of a new van. This gift, from a Foundation donor, also includes a trust that will provide the Methodist Home of New Orleans with a large endowment. "We think it is very nice to have committed United Methodists throughout the state who remember our agency even when they are many miles away from the community we serve. We appreciate all the many gifts we get, but are especially appreciative of this type of contribution," commented Dr. Hodges.

Dr. Reed said, "The Foundation is pleased to provide an extension to the ministries of institutions like the Methodist Home of New Orleans and to churches throughout the state." The Methodist Home of New Orleans is a residential treatment center providing food, shelter, clothing, education, religious services, medical treatment, psychological evaluations and treatment for abused, abandoned and neglected children from the ages of 6-14.

Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director, United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana and Dr. Richard Hodges, Executive Director, Methodist Home of New Orleans, look over the Investment Management Agreement signed between the two organizations recently.

Methodist Children's Home of Ruston on page 6. **(page 5 in local editions)**

District to Hold Prayer and Worship Service

A District-wide prayer and worship service honoring the men and women of the Ruston District currently serving in Operation Desert Storm and those on "stand-by" will be held on Monday, February 18. The 7 p.m. service will take place at Trinity United Methodist Church in Ruston. There will be a roll call of all persons serving, and the evening message will be delivered by Air Force Reserve Chaplain the Reverend William Willis. Mr. Willis is currently serving as Chaplain of Methodist Children's Home in Ruston.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

Counter fear with faith . . .

A familiar cartoon shows a bearded, robed man carrying a sign that says: "Repent! The End is near!"

Amid the stresses of the Persian Gulf war, many people are treating the cartoon's message as anything but a joke.

In fact, recent newspaper and television reports indicate that a fearful public has created a boom market for so-called "Armageddon" literature. We have received reports from several local churches of confusion caused by suggestions that current events are ushering in the the "end-times" described in the New Testament book of Revelation.

The use of biblical prophecy as a crystal ball for interpreting specific current events creates a double distortion. It reduces the Bible to something it is not: a book of predictions. And it causes one not to derive the benefits of what the Bible is: a book of faith.

The Rev. James M. Efird, professor of biblical interpretation at Duke University Divinity School, amplifies: "The language [of biblical prophecy] is symbolic, not literal, and what it's saying is what all Apocalyptic literature says—keep the faith, don't go over to the other side, God will intervene in His infinite wisdom."

Two responses are in order when we encounter fearful "end-times" predictions based on Bible passages.

First, we should recall with calm assurance Jesus' words about the "end-times:" "But about that day or hour no one knows . . ." (Mark 13:32 NRSV). Likewise we are advised not to be anxious about the future (Matthew 6:34), but always to be prepared to face the end, which is in God's hands (Matthew 24:36-44).

No effort to overlay apocalyptic visions from Revelation with current events in the Middle East can match the straightforward power and simplicity of Jesus' counsel: "Trust God."

Second, we should demonstrate our own positive, faithful use of the Scriptures for comfort and direction during frightening times.

God's Word in Scripture does not provide us with an escape from painful worldly realities, including the realities of war and senseless destruction of human life and of God's world. Rather God's Word enables us, as Christians, to experience inner peace even when the world around us appears to be falling apart.

As followers of Christ, we should hold fast to this firm assurance: "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Romans 8:38-39 NRSV)."

. . . And show faith in acts

If you hear someone proclaiming today's events in the Middle East as evidence that the "end-times" are at hand (see preceding editorial), we suggest the following very practical responses:

1. Listen carefully, and with respect, for the fear, anger and other emotions that likely underlie and propel such proclamations.

2. Offer a more helpful alternative means of understanding and using Scripture to face the current world situation.

3. Urge that confusion not be spread by dogmatic assertions to others of one's "end times" views. This is particularly important when children are involved. They likely already are filled with fear, and need to be offered a perspective of faith rather than of fear.

4. Suggest that feelings of helplessness and waiting might best be addressed through some new form of outreach. That could take the form of a prayer group or a support group for families of persons in military service. Or it might involve efforts to assist the undiminished number of refugees, jobless, and homeless people in our local communities.

Letters to the Editor

I'm sick and tired of these 'racism' charges!

I am sick and tired of the constant labeling of everything as "racism!"

Of the people surveyed on the "core issue" for Christians in the Middle East war (see UMR, Jan. 25), I find it aggravating that only our fellow black minister raised the issue of racism.

Noting that, "we are only selectively patient" . . . (with certain groups), the Rev. Joseph E. Lowery states that, "Militarism is often the hammer which drives the nail of racism into the coffin of economic exploitation." I am wondering what this idea,". . patience or no patience . . . " and "economic exploitation" has to do with racism? It appears that Dr. Lowery is just trying to ride the poor old nag of racism into the ground because he cannot find another or a real issue to take issue with.

Ronald T. Gardner
El Centro, California

How ironic!

How ironic that, on the same day I read in "Faith Watch" (see UMR, Jan. 25) that there is a shortage of gas masks for distribution to the Palestinian populations in the occupied territories, I also read an item in my local newspaper that the hottest-selling item in American army/navy stores is . . . Israeli-made gas masks. According to the article, military supply stores are importing the masks from Israel by the hundreds, to meet the demands of American war memorabilia collectors.

If Israel has enough gas masks to export to the United States for profit, how can it possibly claim not to have enough for distribution to the Palestinians living in the occupied territories?

Thomas Ingrassia
Holden, Massachusetts

They're not members

Instead of continuing infants as preparatory members after baptism we now want to pronounce that a ceremony plus a few drops or a few gallons of holy water now make them members of the church, and by implication, Christian (see UMR, Jan. 18).

Let's apply the Wesleyan Quadrilateral on this new belief:

Is it Scriptural? No.

Is it from experience? No.

Is it reasonable? No. Dedication of infants is more reasonable because it stresses that the infant will likely become a Christian if the family and the local church work together throughout the child's life to demonstrate their faith.

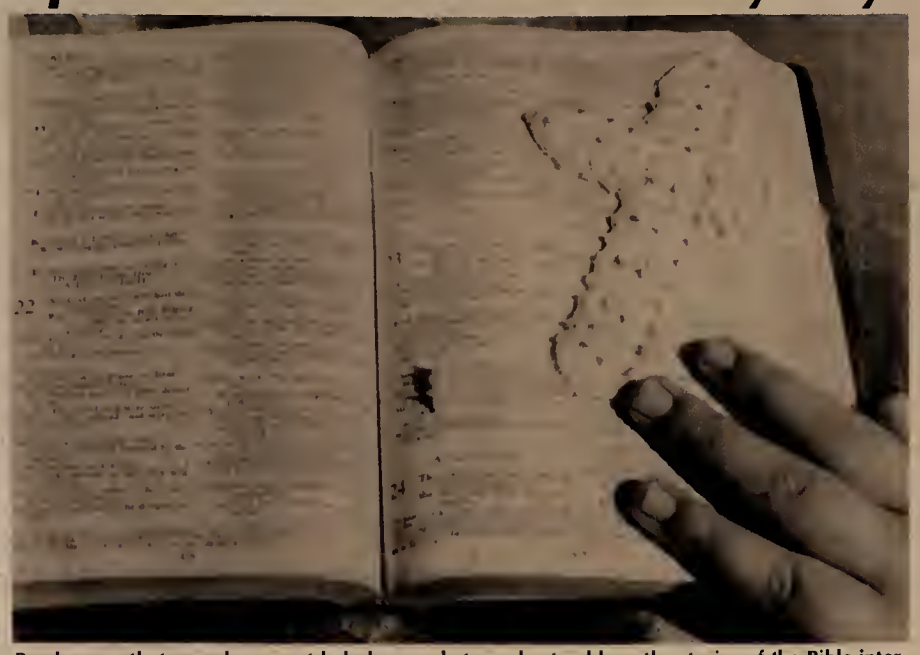
Is it traditional? Well, only in certain traditions with whom we seem to want eventually to unite into some kind of a super-church.

Jim Woodward
Rayne, Louisiana

What do you think?

Readers cite preachers as Bible literacy key

Recently the Reporter asked readers what methods they would recommend to improve Christians' in-depth "biblical literacy" (see UMR, Jan. 18). Here's a sampling of responses:



Readers say that preachers must help laypeople to understand how the stories of the Bible intersect with their own faith journeys to improve biblical literacy.

Jeanette Zimmerly, Champaign, Ill.: My suggestions:

■ Videotape talks on the Bible by a professor from one of our fine seminaries. It would be stimulating and conducive to discussion to have kick-off lessons on facts and facets of the Bible—authorship, relatedness, chronology, variations of presentation, etc. I feel every Christian needs to know what is taught every seminarian. The churches, in turn, may rent or purchase tapes, initiating a whole new world in the church library.

■ Every seminary should require a course titled "The Preacher as Teacher." Such background would enable a pastor to teach the Bible lesson during morning worship rather than to read it before the congregation. A teaching preacher leads to a biblically literate congregation.

* * *

The Rev. Emilio E. Miller, Tampa, Fla.: People don't come to Bible study because they are afraid of being embarrassed. In my ministry I have discovered that each local church will find a lot of success, if they advertise that: "A new Bible study group will begin meeting this week. We will begin studying the Bible as if we have never seen a Bible before. This will be an in-depth study, but beginning from the very basics. This will be a great opportunity for all of us to learn and recap our Bible literacy." If a class like this is started every year, biblical literacy and depth will soon become the norm of the congregation's lifestyle.

* * *

Lorna Bowie, Quitman, Texas: What we need to do is to stop our pastors from attending too many meetings. They're running away from the basics that Jesus taught. There's too much politics in our religious districts. Our preachers are moved around too often. Go back to the drawing board. Start with the Ten Commandments, catechism and get rid of that Sunday School material that is pushed at us. If John Wesley were to ride into our town and see our social clubs and watered-down issues, he'd horse-whip every single one of us.

* * *

The Rev. Richard H. Peterson, Ph.D., Scarborough, Maine: Your publication comes to the Bible Society of Maine. You are right when you point out biblical illiteracy, but I do question the remark: "Gallup's findings effectively refute simplistic 'back to the Bible' formulas that equate mere exposure to Scripture with spiritual and moral renewal."

I submit two recommendations:

■ Tell the preachers not to "expose" the people to Scripture, but to "expose" the Bible to people. Tell them to announce to the congregation that they are going to preach through one book at a time, proceeding at the rate of about one chapter a week. Their congregations will not be bored.

■ Provide them, both individuals and congregations, with broad outlines, from Genesis to Revelation. Help them to see the story-line. Help them to "plug into" the story.

The preachers can do it. Have them read the Bible for themselves and then tell the story in their own words and in the context of their own experience with God. I cannot think of a better way to bring revival to the church and salvation to the world.

* * *

Margie A. Harris, Friendswood, Texas: Two years ago I went on a work mission trip to Reynosa, Mexico. While there I attended all church services. When God's word was read everyone stood and read in unison. It was very moving. Now every time my minister reads the Bible I long to be standing reading and affirming to myself God's word.

I recommend the minister and congregation stand and read from the pew Bible in unison. In this way God can speak to each one and more in-depth involvement will come to each individual in his or her own time.

* * *

H. Loren Lewis, Pensacola, Fla.: Biblical literacy and in-depth involvement in the local church begins with the pastor, who must be thoroughly convinced that it is possible and that it must happen. Biblical preaching must be couched in compassionate love in order to be contagious to every member of the flock. The invitation to "get on board" must be all-inclusive.

* * *

Elizabeth Everitt, Lake Elmo, Minn.: Start a Bible study group. I have been leading one for seven years. We do two chapters a week and meet for 90 minutes every Tuesday afternoon. We are no more than seven but that is all right. At least we are reading every word, considering commentaries, and trying to understand what God is saying.

* * *

Juta Beauchamp, Ashaway, R.I.: There is no short-cut to Bible study. Someone has said that one ought to read the book through at least 50 times before one makes the attempt to study it. I disagree with the editorial which seems to imply that individual reading of the Bible lacks depth. It can be possible, but not realistic, to cover all of the Bible in group study. It takes three or four chapters per day to get through all of the Bible in one year. I recommend it highly, especially for those who preach to others.

* * *

Mrs. C.W. Russell, Morton, Ill.: First people need to experience God to find themselves hungering and thirsting for righteousness. The key to in-depth study I feel—and I can only go by my journey—is this powerful wrestling about my faith that led me to a real encounter which surprisingly changed me. I had blind faith (powerful) and realized without Christ forgiving me I was nothing. So that really put the thirst for Bible study in me ever since.

Here I Stand

We need to be silent as we begin worship

By WALTER T. RATCLIFFE

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!' " (Psalms 122:1 NRSV).

Many of us by reason of habit and of need go to worship regularly.

Usually we are greeted at the church doors by some friendly people. We enter into the narthex, which the dictionary describes as a vestibule leading to the nave of the church. It used to be that when we entered the nave we became silent, walked to our pew and then paused in prayer and/or meditation to prepare ourselves for worship.

Now, we tend to meet and greet others, before the service begins. Church bulletins have said "The service begins with the first note of the prelude." But what happens? Many keep on talking.

If the organist has carefully selected the prelude, and practiced it long and hard, he or she feels that it can be a real factor in helping worshippers to prepare for the service. When the talking continues during the prelude, I have known organists to say—and they have said it to me—"We could eliminate the prelude."

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Walter T. Ratcliffe of St. Petersburg, Fla. is a retired member of the Detroit Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Yet we come to the service out of a noisy world, we come with personal need, and we need a time of preparation.

Another thing is happening today that destroys the value of the prelude. We have changed from having announcements before the offering—that was the wrong time—and placed them at the beginning of the service or at least near the beginning.

I know a church where the order of worship calls for the prelude, followed by a greeting, and then a prayer and hymn, and then welcome to the first time guests. What purpose did the prelude serve?

The greeting and the welcome of guests should come first, then the prelude, then the call to worship and then the hymn. In this way we would not interfere with the worshipful spirit.

In this way, we would fulfill what was said to me many years ago in seminary:

"Before the service we talk to God. During the service God talks to us. After the service we talk to each other."

The narthex can become the place of friendly and whole-hearted greeting. We need a friendly and sociable church but we also need "To be still and know that I am God."

What others are saying

"It's OK for people to be against the war. It's OK for people to think the military action is important. What holds us together is that we all have a real desire for peace."
—**The Rev. Sam Johnson, Franklin, Mass. (Southern New England Annual Conference)**

* * *

"Our vocation is to groan and sigh with the sighing of the Spirit in our prayers."
—**The Rev. Avery Post, past president of the United Church of Christ**

* * *

"An Iraqi man, speaking through an interpreter, told me: 'What I'm most upset about is that when the war comes, my children will hate your children and your children will hate my children.' I took out pictures of my two children and showed them to him, and he told me about his five children. We made a pact. I agreed to tell my children that Iraqi and Middle Eastern people are beautiful, generous and wonderful, and he was going to tell his children that he met an American, and all Americans were not terrible, ugly people. As soon as I got back to Washington, I telephoned my daughter and told her about the man I met."
—**The Rev. Ken Bedell, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio.**

* * *

"Sign outside Gethsemane Lutheran Church in St. Louis: 'Roseanne Barr doesn't sing here but you can!' "
—**"The Joyful Noiseletter," publication of the Fellowship of Merry Christians**

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (NRSV)."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Mark 4:24)

Readings for week of Feb. 18

Monday: Psalms 25:1-7
Tuesday: Psalms 25:8-10
Wednesday: Genesis 9:8-11
Thursday: Genesis 9:12-17
Friday: Mark 1:9-11
Saturday: Mark 1:12-15
Sunday: 1 Peter 3:18-22

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

ESCAPE FROM LIBERIA: The Rev. Marie Smith-Eastman, superintendent of the St. Paul River District of the United Methodist Church in Liberia, recently escaped from that civil war-torn country. She telephoned leaders of the Liberian Prayer Band at Trinity UMC in Providence, R.I., after she made her way to Sierra Leone, reportedly afoot, weak and malnourished. Bishop F. Herbert Skeete (Boston Area) is working with bishops of Liberia and Sierra Leone to bring Ms. Smith-Eastman to Rhode Island to recuperate.

CONCERN FOR ISRAEL: A newspaper advertisement voicing "outrage" and "concern for the people of Israel" growing out of Iraqi missile attacks and sponsored by the American Jewish Committee has been signed by several score of religious, racial and ethnic leaders. These include United Methodist Bishops George W. Bashore (Pittsburgh Area); R. Sheldon Duecker (Chicago Area); Ernest A. Fitzgerald (Atlanta Area); Calvin D. McConnell (Seattle Area); and Jack M. Tuell (Los Angeles Area).

CALIFORNIA FREEZE APPEAL: United Methodists in the California-Nevada Annual Conference are mobilizing relief efforts following a major freeze that hit citrus and vegetable crops in 32 counties during December. Added to the severe freeze is a drought in the California Valley and cutbacks in water deliveries to the agricultural community. The Rev. Jacqueline Meadows, Fresno District superintendent, told the Reporter that the crisis affects UM churches because "a lot of our parishioners and pastors are trying to help minister to farmers' needs. Congregations are also suffering in the farming areas." Gifts can be made for "The California Freeze," Advance No. 901115-1.

DRUG ABUSE HEARINGS: Nationwide hearings to determine the scope of national drug abuse will be held during March in connection with the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative on Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Violence. The hearings will be held at 10 locations March 7 and 8. Locations are Washington, Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, Tampa, Oklahoma City, White Plains, N.Y., Dorchester, Mass., Chiloquin, Ore., and Sandusky, Mich. For details, write the initiative, Room 214, 900 South Arlington Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17109.

'PEERLESS PREACHER' DIES: The Rev. Granville T. Walker, longtime senior minister of University Christian Church in Fort Worth, Texas—one of the largest within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)—died Jan. 4. He joined the faculty of Texas Christian University, across the street from the church, in 1939, and took the pastorate in 1943. His successor there, the Rev. A.M. Pennybacker, called him a "preacher without peer" and added, "Our denomination has been reshaped by his insights."

WORSHIPERS AID CHARITIES: Regular worship attenders give more time and money to charitable causes, according to a report from Religion in American Life. The report indicates that people who attend services "weekly or nearly every week" gave an average of 3.8 percent of their household income to charitable causes in 1989, compared to one-fourth that amount—8/10ths of 1 percent—for those who attended less. Likewise, regular attenders volunteered an average of 3.4 hours weekly to public-interest causes, compared to less than half that amount of time—1.6 hours weekly—for others.

Compiled from news and staff reports

UM camps to receive $90 million gift

Anonymous benefactor assigns $20 million for 'all-churches' camping center

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

An anonymous benefactor, now deceased, has pledged more than $90 million for United Methodist camping ministries in the United States.

The announcement last week stunned more than 400 participants at the national meeting of United Methodist camp leaders at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center near Palestine, Texas.

Maurice Wise, a longtime leader in camping ministries, presented the document outlining details of the gift.

Mr. Wise, acting as a representative of the donor's estate, said the pledged gift is in two parts:

First, a $20 million gift to establish a national camp, conference center and retreat center to be located in Texas;

Second, at least $1 million to each annual conference in the United States that had camping ministries at the time of the announcement. Like the gift for the national center, this one is designated for camping, conference and retreat ministries within annual conferences.

According to United Methodist News Service, the pledged gift is one of the largest ever offered a United Methodist church or agency.

Two donors are involved in this history-making gift, Mr. Wise said. The secondary donor, who now administers the funds, remains unnamed in order to maintain the anonymity of the original donor. This person is also a United Methodist, he continued.

The gift-pledging document states that the national center will be made available to all United Methodists and to all Christian churches, operated by The United Methodist Church and aligned with the denomination's General Board of Discipleship.

In addition, it will provide facilities for use by children, youth, adults and families.

According to the document, the national center will be a not-for-profit corporation with a seven-member board. Three lay and three clergy will serve staggered and limited terms. The seventh member, Mr. Wise, a layman, will serve for life.

Mr. Wise is director of Camp Horizon, a United Methodist camp in Arkansas City, Kan., and a longtime confidant of the donor.

The $20 million gift—$10 million in endowments for operations, maintenance, program, leadership development and capital building fund budgets plus $10 million to build, equip and develop the site—will be given, according to the document, "when a working relationship has been established with the General Board of Discipleship."

The additional gifts of $1 million each to qualifying annual conferences will be delivered Feb. 1, 2000, to the treasurer of each such conference contingent upon a one-page proposal submitted to the proper office of the General Board of Discipleship by Jan. 1, 1993, the document stated.

"The gift is not a matching gift or a challenge gift," the document stated, "but it is suggested that each annual conference give prayerful consideration to a capital funds campaign beginning in the year 2000."

Although no legally-binding gift-conveying documents were presented, National Camping Committee chairperson Kathy Trotter said the committee accepted the intent of the donor on faith and would cooperate with the Board of Discipleship in developing a workable structure for carrying out the donors' wishes.

Maurice Wise
. . .conveyed donor's wishes

The announcement apparently came as a complete shock to participants at the national camp leaders' meeting.

Anti-war mood gains momentum at WCC Assembly

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

CANBERRA, Australia—Bright summer skies in "the land down under" failed to chase the clouds of war that hovered over the opening days of the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly.

Those war clouds threatened to shape the assembly's mood and agenda.

Nearly 4,000 Christians from around the globe, including some 83 United Methodists, listened as speaker after speaker during the meeting's inaugural events alluded to the war in the Persian Gulf.

Most, but not all, spoke in opposition to the conflict and in favor of an immediate ceasefire.

At the outset of the Feb. 7-20 gathering, the executive committee of the ecumenical body of Protestant and Orthodox Christians issued an appeal for an end to hostilities and urged "all concerned to take bold initiatives to stop the spiral of violence and death."

Sir Paul Reeves, former governor-general of New Zealand, told participants in a rousing sermon at the opening worship service that the Persian Gulf war is "neither holy nor just" and that it perpetuates inequities between nations, within societies and against the earth.

Two pre-assembly meetings—one of women, one of youths—called for a ceasefire and for renewed diplomatic efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to the gulf conflict.

And at a special called meeting for U.S. participants in the Assembly, United Methodist Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area) said that "the most patriotic thing we can do is to stop the war so that our sons and daughters don't have to die on the battlefield."

But Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke, in a vigorous welcoming address to assembly participants, defended the multi-national war effort.

His speech elicited audible expressions of protest by WCC delegates seated in the football field-sized meeting hall of the National Convention Center.

Mr. Hawke, whose nation has sent troops to the Persian Gulf, called Saddam Hussein a "thief" who had "tried to steal from the world community our hopes for a more peaceful and harmonious existence."

He was firmly rebuked afterwards by WCC president Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of India. The Orthodox prelate received sustained applause when he said that, while nobody questioned the need for Iraq to leave Kuwait, "many people hold grave doubts about the means taken to make Iraq do that."

In response to the growing anti-war mood of the Assembly, a "peace processional" of participants and church members from the Canberra area marched through the streets of Canberra. The march ended at the Assembly worship tent on the campus of the Australian National University and dissolved into an all-night prayer vigil for peace.

The United Methodist Church's top ecumenical staff officer, the Rev. Bruce Robbins, said he anticipated that at least one plenary session of the two-week meeting would focus on the gulf war.

Comparison of proposed changes in Social Principles

(See story below)

Current church view

Portion of Paragraph 71F of the Social Principles pertaining to homosexuality:

"Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship which enables reconciling relationships with God, with others and with self. Although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching, we affirm that God's grace is available to all. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons."

Proposed removal
(Change highlighted):

"We acknowledge with humility that the Church has been unable to arrive at a common mind on the compatibility of homosexual practice with Christian faith. Many consider the practice incompatible with Christian teaching. Many believe it acceptable when practiced in a context of human caring and covenantal faithfulness. **The present state of knowledge in the relevant disciplines does not provide a satisfactory basis upon which the Church can responsibly maintain a specific prohibition of homosexual practice.** The Church seeks further understanding through continued prayer, study and pastoral experience. In doing so, the Church continues to affirm that God's grace is bestowed upon all and that the members of Christ's body are called to be in ministry for and with one another, and to the world."

Proposed retention
(Retention highlighted):

"We acknowledge with humility that the Church has been unable to arrive at a common mind on the compatibility of homosexual practice with Christian faith. Many consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. Some believe it acceptable when practiced in a context of human caring and covenantal faithfulness. **The present state of knowledge in the relevant disciplines does not provide a satisfactory basis upon which the Church can responsibly change its position. Therefore we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching."** . . . (The remaining text is the same as the first proposal).

Local-church study suggested on issues around homosexuality

ST. LOUIS—How should local congregations respond to homosexuals who seek to be part of The United Methodist Church?

Six "implications for the life and ministry of the church" are proposed by the churchwide Committee to Study Homosexuality.

The suggestions were recommended to be included in the committee's report, which will be completed in August, given to the General Council on Ministries in September and sent on to the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

The six recommendations are:

■ **Proclaim the church's inclusiveness of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.** Committee members said this recommendation is based on the church's understanding that God's grace through Christ is available to all, unconditionally and without exception.

■ **Call for ethical standards of sexual conduct.** The committee was unable to agree, however, whether the "highest ethical standards for sexual behavior" include prohibition of homosexual practice.

■ **Lift up the importance of the church as a covenant community for support, accountability and discernment, where ethical standards are brought to bear.** Study committee members said they hope the common struggle implied by this recommendation will strengthen the effort to determine ethical standards.

■ **Call for the church to support civil rights and protection against abuse and discrimination for all gay and lesbian people.** Members noted such issues as discrimination in housing, employment, immigration, property rights and medical rights.

■ **Call for local congregation study on homosexuality.** The suggestion is for local congregations to study homosexuality within the context of all human sexuality and to consider for whom and in what moral areas the church at large can legislate.

■ **Recommend the General Conference consider legislation that would return the question of ordination of homosexuals to annual conferences.** Members said they are aware of the problems that could be caused by differing ordination standards, especially since the church's "general superintendents" (bishops) are drawn from the ranks of the ordained clergy.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Study committee eyes change in church's homosexuality stance

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

ST. LOUIS—After two years of gathering evidence, a special churchwide study panel has come down to grappling with one question: Should The United Methodist Church change its statement that the practice of homosexuality is "incompatible" with Christian teaching?

Two proposals—one upholding the church's current stance, the other advocating change—are part of a preliminary draft of a report by the Committee to Study Homosexuality. Both are based on admittedly "inconclusive evidence" gathered by the committee.

A denominationwide study of homosexuality was authorized by the 1988 General Conference. The committee will finalize its report during a meeting Aug. 22-25. The study panel must present its report to the church's General Council on Ministries in September.

Both proposals recommend changing current language contained in Paragraph 71F of the "Social Principles," a collection of the church's stand on various social issues.

The two proposals carry similar wording (see comparison above). The proposals' drafters said they feel the suggested language reflects the church's divergent opinions on the acceptance of homosexual practice and the inconclusive nature of the evidence the committee has gathered.

Where they differ is in what conclusion can be drawn from inconclusive evidence.

Each proposal presented to the 25-member committee was drafted by four members.

One proposing deletion of present language was drafted by the Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, professor of Christian social ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington; the Rev. Victor P. Furnish, professor of New Testament at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas; the Rev. Tex Sample, professor of ethics at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City; and Dr. Sally Brown Geis, a sociologist and director of the Iliff Institute at Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

A counterproposal sustaining the incompatibility of homosexual practice with Christian teaching was drafted by Bishop Richard C. Looney (South Georgia Area); the Rev. David A. Seamands, professor of pastoral care at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky.; William E. Lux, a farmer, of Manchester, Iowa; and Dr. James V. Holsinger Jr., a physician, of Washington.

During a non-binding "preference vote" at the meeting, 17 members voted in favor of changing the church's stance on homosexuality. The four drafters of the proposal to retain the church's stance voted in favor of that position.

Both proposals have been forwarded to the study panel's writing team for consideration in drafting its report. The writing team includes Dr. Wogaman, Dr. Geis, Bishop Looney; Dr. Richard E. Martin, a sociologist, of Indianapolis; the Rev. Nancy S. Yamasaki, study panel chair, of Spokane, Wash.; and C. David Lundquist, chief executive of the General Council on Ministries.

The committee's report will summarize its biblical, theological, ethical and scientific findings. It will include testimony heard during the study panel's meetings and from six "listening posts" held around the country.

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Faith connections

COPING WITH WAR: A leaflet on helping children cope with war in the Persian Gulf has been made available from The United Methodist Publishing House. The Rev. Duane A. Ewers, editor of church school publications, said requests for such a resource have been received from chaplains, pastors and parents. Free copies of the eight-page leaflet are available from the publishing house by telephoning (800) 251-8591.

PASTORAL GOURMET: A United Methodist minister from the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference cheers hospital patients—without visitation. He does it through his syndicated cooking show. The Rev. Jeff Smith, popularly known as public television's "Frugal Gourmet," said recently in "The Christian Science Monitor" that he receives letters from people in hospitals concerning his program. "There seems to be something comforting about food and the kitchen," he said. Mr. Smith's show is one of the Public Broadcasting System's five most important programs overall.

INTERETHNIC LEADERSHIP: Plans are undeway for a training and orientation session for racial and ethnic delegates and observers to the 1992 General Conference. Training will be in conjunction with the church's General Commission on Religion and Race. The Rev. Jose Palos, chairman of a denominationwide Interethnic Strategy Development Group, said the group will continue to advocate elections of racial and ethnic bishops and representatives to general church agencies. They also will address issues of racism and sexism. The group was formed in the early 1980s as an ongoing forum for agency staff and members of church governing boards.

REAPPRAISAL URGED: The president of the Association of Filipino-American United Methodists is calling for a "from the bottom up" appraisal of the church's national Asian-American caucus. Citing "tensions in the connection," Art Guillermo, president of the Filipino caucus for four years, said in a position paper that the time has come to evaluate the federation's "validity, its structure, soundness of mission and relevance of its objectives in the face of emerging needs and concerns of Asian-Americans." Mr. Guillermo says that Filipinos and other subethnic groups long have felt slighted in election and nomination of federation board members.

Compiled from news and staff reports

UM chaplains' letters tell of faith among military

From staff and wire reports

Witness amid War

Letters from their pastors called into active military chaplaincy brought the Persian Gulf war close to home recently for at least two United Methodist congregations.

Troops "who truly know Jesus" are going through the war "like giants," according to one chaplain on active duty there.

"I'm holding services almost every night and getting huge crowds," the Rev. J. Clif Christopher, pastor of First United Methodist Church in West Memphis, Ark., wrote. He was called to duty with a U.S. Army field hospital unit in December and arrived in Saudi Arabia in mid-January.

"I can say I have never worked so hard to choose the right Scriptures and say the right thing," Mr. Christopher wrote.

"I have prayed like never before, and God has strengthened me for the task. Already I've been called in to face situations I never thought I'd have to, and God has provided.

"Certainly I miss you terribly. Be the church. Lay foundations under lives that will strengthen them when crisis like this occurs.

"Those who truly know Jesus—not just know of him—are going through this like giants. Your job back home is to see that more and more do know and commit their lives to Him."

Anticipating the possibility of increased ground fighting, the chaplain said such a move would mean "we will have to be ready to heal wounds and spirits."

Another chaplain writing on much the same theme was the Rev. Fred B. Hembree Jr.

He's an Army chaplain in a medical division in Germany, preparing to minister to the needs of the wounded and the dead of Operation Desert Storm.

In a letter to his congregation at Hamilton United Methodist Church in Nashville, Mr. Hembree said that so far his ministry had been with doctors, nurses and technicians who staff U.S. military hospitals in Germany.

Mr. Hembree also spends time, he said, with the young people, 18 to 20 years old, who are assigned as body handlers.

"Their job," he wrote, "is to carry the deceased, put them in body bags, then carry them to the refrigerated trucks for later shipment into Dover, Del. I pray that their services will not be needed.

"I know this sounds morbid," he continued, "but this is part of my ministry here. If we receive mass casualties, we will care for them here in Europe for a time, then ship the injured back to the states as soon as possible."

Mr. Hembree said that the terrorist threat in Germany is very real. Also the anti-war demonstrators upset him and other medical personnel.

"Most of us don't want war," he said. "Most of us are here to save lives, not take them, and their rioting doesn't do anything but complicate our lives and create anxiety and fear."

Associate Editor Diane Huie Balay and United Methodist News Service contributed to this report.

NASHVILLE—The Hembree family—from left, Benji, Jonathan, Rebekah and their mother, Cathy,—is being cared for by the congregation of Hamilton UMC while their father and husband, the Rev. Fred B. Hembree Jr., is on active duty as a U.S. Army chaplain with a medical division in Germany.

Congregation aids family of pastor called to duty

"Right off, everybody told us, 'We'll take care of Cathy and the kids so you don't have to worry about them,'" Cathy Hembree told the Reporter.

Her husband, the Rev. Fred B. Hembree Jr., like more than 40 other Army reserve chaplains, had been called to active duty in Operation Desert Storm.

He, his family and his congregation, Hamilton United Methodist Church in Nashville, had prepared for this eventuality since August, when the increasing buildup of service personnel in the Persian Gulf made it look inevitable.

Although some parsonage families may lose their homes due to the call-up, the Hembree family will not be among them (see related story).

"There was never any doubt," said Susan Wilburn, a member of the church staff.

"They are going to stay (in the parsonage) as long as he's there, regardless of what else happens."

The 500-plus-member congregation has been very supportive of the family, Ms. Wilburn said. The church has a part-time interim pastor, and "the worship committee is working double time."

Cathy Hembree agrees that the congregation is a very close one.

"They were sad," she said, "but they said we'll see this through together."

Christmas was very hard, she said. "Christmas is a special time around our house, and he was the one who made it that way."

But, she continued, the congregation has been constantly helpful with financial support, cards, letters and invitations.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

Number of chaplains in war zone growing

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

At least 42 United Methodist congregations or charges have lost pastors to the military chaplaincy as a result of the Persian Gulf war.

They are part of an estimated 105 United Methodist ordained ministers who are also military chaplains and have been deployed to the Persian Gulf.

The number is growing every day.

Those data come from the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries, a unit of the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

The Rev. James E. Townsend, head of the chaplaincy division, told the Reporter that chaplains are being pulled out of retirement as well as out of active ministries, including local pastorates.

The armed services are targeting those chaplains with specialized skills and experience in counseling and hospital ministry during times of mass casualties, the retired Air Force colonel said.

Churches who lost their pastors are using retired pastors and other available clergy to fill their pulpits, he said.

No pastors have lost their jobs, and "I am not aware that any families had to move out of parsonages," he said.

That may change, he said, because the tour of duty has been extended up to two years for some military personnel.

That may necessitate appointments of new pastors, he said, causing some families presently living in parsonages to move.

However, the chaplaincy division and the Department of Defense have come to a "very, very good understanding" that chaplains' families will be moved to temporary housing at government expense, he said.

In the meantime, letters from chaplains at the front are "full of glowing stories of opportunity for ministry," he said (see related story above).

"Chaplains are being worked to death and loving every minute," he said.

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Laypeople called to live out their heritage as 'catalyst for change'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

ORLANDO, Fla.—How do you respond to the claim that the Christian church was historically a lay movement?

Are lay people living up to that heritage today?

Some 200 United Methodists were asked those questions in mid-January during the Second Quadrennial Meeting on Lay Speaking.

Barbara Thompson

People from nearly every one of the church's 73 annual conferences in the U.S. and Puerto Rico and from Germany were challenged to go back home and develop more leadership, caring and speaking opportunities in "cutting edge" ministries.

"United Methodists believe in a Gospel that can transform both individuals and communities and can change society," said Barbara Thompson, keynote speaker and chief executive for the church's General Commission on Religion and Race.

Transforming society, she contends, means being a "catalyst for change."

"We in the lay movement must assume our responsibility for service and be held accountable," said Mrs. Thompson, a member of Mount Zion United Methodist Church in the Georgetown section of Washington.

"Jesus was an upstart layman who claimed to know the will of God. This wandering preacher called together some marginalized people who claimed to be his disciples. . . . They built congregations, fed the poor, and challenged political structures. From this lay movement came the powerful movement of Christianity.

"What would happen to the church if those of us use our commitment to transform the church and society?"

She said the time has come for laity to be more like those in the early church, saying, "Here we are—send us."

Mrs. Thompson said many lay speakers have said, "'I want to know how I can get my pastor to let me have more time in the pulpit.' Is that all there is? The answer is 'No.'

"I believe that an effective lay speaker is an effective lay member."

What traits identify effective lay members? Ms. Thompson said they are:

■ Called together for worship. "We always want to tell the preacher how to preach, the singer how to sing. Are we doing our jobs?"

■ Called to be a part of congregational growth. Don't say, "They ought to start to a new church. You are the 'they'."

■ Called to be a part of a caring ministry. "The biggest complaint among lay people is, 'Nobody cares when I don't come to church. All they want is my money'."

■ Called to use our skills of communication in a covenant community. "That means you're called to bring relief to men, women and children who are hurting, such as in prison ministries."

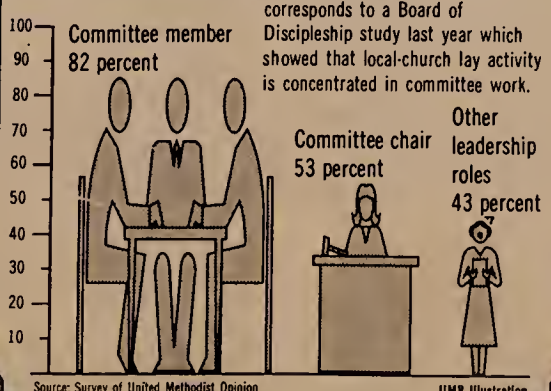
■ Called to help churches to understand the connectionalism. "It is our responsibility to interpret the policies and practices of our denomination."

"United Methodists believe in a Gospel that can transform both individuals and communities and can change society."
—Barbara Thompson

United Methodist Snapshot

Where do laypeople serve?

A recent survey of 758 United Methodist laypeople with above-average local church participation showed that the most common form of lay leadership is service on committees. This finding corresponds to a Board of Discipleship study last year which showed that local-church lay activity is concentrated in committee work.



Source: Survey of United Methodist Opinion

UMR Illustration

Scud attack challenges U.S. Jews

American Jewish leaders get a taste of Israeli life during Gulf war

By STEVE RODAN
Religious News Service

JERUSALEM—It was the end of a long day of touring for the 51 American Jewish delegates when they settled down to what they hoped would be a sumptuous meal and after-dinner speech.

Instead, the only thing they got to taste was Israeli life during the gulf war. An air raid siren sounded, a warning of an Iraqi missile attack on the Jewish state.

The members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations left the room together with the scheduled speaker, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Entered sealed shelter

Both Israelis and Americans entered the specially-sealed air raid shelter of the Jerusalem hotel and put on their gas masks. Some conference delegates gasped as they saw babies being placed in tiny cribs protected by plastic tents.

"I'll never forget this," said Seymour Reich, head of B'nai B'rith International and outgoing chairman of the presidents' conference.

Jewish leaders had been prepared for an Iraqi attack when they left for the hastily-prepared mission of solidarity with Israel Jan. 27. The delegates were given gas masks and instructions in civil defense when they arrived at Ben-Gurion airport.

But the conference members appeared stunned when the air raid sirens sounded two days later. Some tried to reach telephones to tell their families back in the United States that they were safe. Others fingered their gas masks, wondering whether to put them on.

Many strained to understand the Hebrew-language television newscast which reported an Iraqi missile attack on the Jewish state and ordered Israelis to enter their sealed rooms and put on their gas masks.

As it turned out, one Iraqi missile landed in the West Bank, causing no injuries and slight damage.

In the eight Iraqi missile attacks Jan. 18-28, Israel sustained five dead and more than 200 injured.

More than 2,000 apartments were damaged or destroyed, according to officials.

When Mr. Netanyahu finished his speech there was silence. Nobody had any questions. Some conference delegates said they were simply drained.

Later, the American Jewish leaders called their experience a watershed. Shoshana Cardin, the current chairman of the presidents' conference, recalled seeing a baby in the plastic tent chewing on a pacifier and trying to chew another pacifier in his right hand.

'All too real'

"It was very moving and devastating in a way," Mrs. Cardin said. "This unreal way has become all too real here. We needed to see that. We needed to feel that. We needed to hear it."

Jewish leaders said they would relate the episode when they met with officials of the Bush administration in Washington Jan. 31.

The conference pledged to renew efforts to raise political and financial support for the Jewish state.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Israel is attacked by scud missiles

TEL AVIV, Israel—Two elderly women look at the damage caused when an Iraqi Scud missile slammed into their house. American Jewish leaders are reportedly marshalling financial support for Israel.

Broadcasters applaud Gulf war policy

By KIM A. LAWTON
Religious News Service

WASHINGTON—While many mainline denominations and Catholic groups have been expressing opposition to President George Bush's military policy in the Persian Gulf, members of the primarily evangelical National Religious Broadcasters, meeting recently in Washington, announced their support of the president.

In closed business meetings during the group's 48th annual convention, the 90-member board of directors unanimously passed two resolutions expressing that support.

"We, who nationally and internationally herald the name of the Prince of Peace, pledge our support to President George Bush, who has conscientiously and persistently tried to make peace without war," said the first resolution.

"We have resolved as the National Religious Broadcasters to wholeheartedly stand in prayer and in support of our president and the government of the United States of America as they do all that is necessary, though costly, to bring genuine peace in the Middle East."

President addressed group

The resolution was presented directly to Mr. Bush, who addressed the group in what was only his second public appearance since the war began.

Mr. Bush expressed gratitude for the support and emphasized that the war is a "moral" one.

"The war in the gulf is not a Christian war, a Jewish war, or a Muslim war, it is a just war," the president asserted. "And it is a war with which good will prevail."

Mr. Bush went on to outline why he believes the gulf war has met the principles of the just war theory.

"Some ask whether it's moral to use force to stop the rape, the pillage, the plunder of Kuwait," he said.

"My answer: extraordinary diplomatic efforts having been exhausted to resolve the matter peacefully, then the use of force is moral."

Mr. Bush was warmly received by the broadcasters. His 20-minute speech was interrupted with applause 13 times, and he received two standing ovations.

Special prayer called for

After the president's remarks, a second resolution was adopted calling for special prayer about the situation.

"We implore God in His sovereignty and mercy to grant great wisdom to the leaders of the United States of America and to the leaders of the other nations in the coalition who are defending the Middle East, and we beseech God to assist and protect those nations which are being attacked (by Iraq) and to bring a speedy end to this war," the resolution said.

Outgoing National Religious Broadcasters president Jerry Rose noted that it is rare for the association to comment on issues "not directly related to broadcasting."

He said to the best of his knowledge, no statements were ever issued on the Vietnam War.

Concern about the gulf situation was evident throughout the convention. A special prayer service was called to offer a "concert of prayer" about the situation. Patriotic songs such as the "Star Spangled Banner" and the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" were favorites of guest singers and convention songleaders. Many conventioneers sported lapel flag pins and stickers saying "Support our Troops."

Prophetic books 'hot'

On the trade exhibit floor, Christian books about prophecy and the end times were hot sellers (see related editorial on Page 2).

The Grand Rapids-based Zondervan publishers released an updated version of "Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis," the 1974 best seller by Dallas Theological Seminary professor John Walvoord.

"The war in the gulf is not a Christian war, a Jewish war, or a Muslim war, it is a just war. And it is a war with which good will prevail."
—President Bush

Tyndale House Publishers of Illinois presented its new book, "The Rise of Babylon: Sign of the End Times," by Charles Dyer.

Other popular booths included a tee shirt distributer who sold out his supply of "Support Our Troops, the Battle is the Lord's" shirts on the first day, and Hidden Manna Ministries, who displayed pocket-sized, camouflage-covered excerpts of Scripture designed for the troops serving in the gulf.

In other business, Mr. Rose said 1990 was a "turn around" year for the broadcasters' group.

"We are showing more strength in our membership around the country and . . . we have a greater sense of the need for our kind of association," he said.

David Clark, dean of the school of communications at Regent University in Virginia, was elected to succeed Mr. Rose as president.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY CRAIG BLANKENHORN

Religion plays major role in coverage

Peter Jennings, anchor of ABC News, stands on a map of current hot spots in the Middle East. Religious undercurrents affecting the war in the region are a continuing issue covered by public as well as religious media.

Editor: 'Control of oil is the reason for war'

By RITA HEALY

DENVER—If Iraq's primary export were brussels sprouts, "Christian Century" magazine editor James Wall doubts that the U.S. would be fighting in the Middle East.

A frequent visitor to the Middle East, Dr. Wall spoke Jan. 29 at the Iliff School of Theology's annual Week of Graduate Lectures in Denver, urging an ironic analysis of the Persian Gulf situation.

"Perspective, like truth, is a casualty of war," he said. "When one's country goes to war, one's perspective sharply changes."

The perspective of ministers, he said, will face a challenge of enormous proportion as they both counsel those with family members in the Middle East and try to face up to a larger commitment to peace for the good of humankind.

An irony, he said, is that U.S. involvement in the Middle East has been justified "in the highest and most idealistic terms"—resisting a dictator's aggression, seeking establishment of a world order that resists such aggression, and seeking reestablishment of Kuwait.

Yet the U.S., he said, has made clear choices "that have put us in the current circumstance, primarily a choice of energy dependence.

"Control of oil, control of energy is clearly the reason we're in this war."

Dr. Wall warned that there will be more problems, post-war, in an Arab region "that (will have) suffered another humiliating defeat from the hated west. . . .

"I suspect we will win this war, at great cost," Dr. Wall said, "but we will lose it unless we also win the peace."

Rita Healy is a free-lance writer in Golden, Colo.

History of Hymns

Slaves sing hymn in hope of escape

Let us break bread together on our knees,
Let us break bread together on our knees,
When I fall on my knees,
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

A spiritual of unknown origin, "Let us break bread together on our knees" is always found in our hymnals in the Lord's Supper or Communion section.

Originally a "gathering song" beginning "Let us praise God together on our knees," it was used by slaves hoping to escape to freedom.

This song, and others such as "Steal away to Jesus," may have carried hidden meanings about such gatherings known only to the slaves.

Only in recent decades have spirituals of the African-American heritage appeared in the hymnals of major denominations in America.

They have been welcomed by worshipers and have greatly enriched our congregational singing.

Among the choicest of these are "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder," "Were You There?," "Every Time I Feel the Spirit," "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," and "There Is a Balm in Gilead."

These spirituals, born in the hearts of slaves in America, were sung in the fields of the plantations, the slave homes and the black churches throughout the South. Beyond these circles they were unknown.

The Fisk Jubilee Singers, 11 students from historically black Fisk University in Nashville, left the campus in October 1871 and shared their songs with the world. In New England, Great Britain, and Europe they sang before royalty and common people.

Their singing enabled the Jubilee Singers to collect more than $150,000 for their school.

Jubilee Hall, a monument to the dedication and devotion of these singers, stands today on the Fisk University campus on a spot that was once a slave pen.

International delegates increase

United Methodist News Service

When 998 lay and clergy delegates to the United Methodist Church's top policy-making body gather in Louisville, Ky., in May 1992 for their quadrennial meeting, they will find almost 40 percent more international representatives since 1988.

The 1988 General Conference included 84 delegates from 38 annual and provisional conferences in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

The 1992 session will have 116 representatives from 42 conferences in the three regions.

The changes in delegate strength represent continuing decline in total church membership in the United States and Puerto Rico and increases reported in Africa.

Delegates will be elected during annual conference sessions in 1991.

The number of delegates from each conference is based by church law on a formula involving lay membership in local churches and the number of clergy members in the conference.

Each conference can have at least one lay and one clergy representative.

Dear Deborah

Minister's advice is a 'crushing blow'

Dear Deborah:

I read your letter from Gloria whose husband left her. Your advice was on target, but I'd like to share my experiences.

My husband and I had had some problems and were going to a counselor where I thought I would receive Christian advice regarding our marriage.

When my husband moved out the counselor stated, "The game is over. He doesn't want to play anymore." I was devastated.

The next crushing blow came from the minister who performed the ceremony for us.

"Not all marriages are meant to last," he advised. "Get on with your life."

This was the "professional help" from a pastor and counselor.

When my church family turned their back on me, I nearly lost it all.

I left the church when I couldn't find help.

It is more blessed to receive, but I needed help just to stabilize my life. No one missed me. No one called to say "Are you okay?"

The divorce didn't hurt as much as the loss of a church family.

It is with God's help that I survived. I'm still hurting after many months. I know God doesn't take "sides" in a divorce, but a church certainly does.

Another Divorcee

Dear Sister in Christ:

Thank you for sharing your experience. My heart goes out to you.

I hope you know now, or soon will discover, that not all churches turn their back on time of trouble and that you will find a new church home and family.

I would say to my readers, and perhaps you need to hear it, too, that if you find a counselor or pastor who does not "hear" you, then you are free to look for another.

At the same time, congregations need to evaluate their care for their own members, perhaps once a year.

We know how to care for people in some situations like illness or death, but we need to care for people in many other difficult situations, too.

Please consider if your church could be the one this divorcee writes about.

Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Guatemala elects evangelical president

GUATEMALA CITY—President-elect Jorge Serrano (right) and Vice-President-elect Gustavo Espina wave to supporters shortly after their recent election. Mr. Serrano reportedly promised to keep religion out of his government and to respect the rights of all believers.

methodist children's home news

METHODIST children's home

Terrel J. DeVille, Executive Director
August E. Aamodt, Director of Development

Printed Quarterly by The Methodist Children's Home, Ruston, Louisiana

Thank You:

— For your support of the Children's Home's Offering
— For the many Christmas donations of money and gifts
— For your continuing financial support during the year
— For your prayers

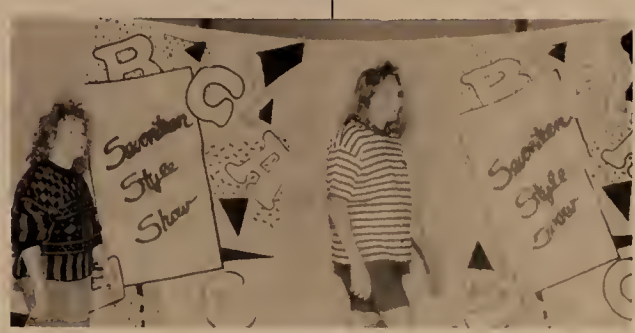
SUMMER FUN

How do you throw a cow chip?

SUMMERS END

Shaving cream contest

Tug of War over a mud puddle



Style show

KIDS

Just being kids

VOLUNTEERS

Bobby Conville — local banker, leads Sunday night Bible study each week and as many as 40 youth attend voluntarily.

ANNUAL AWARDS FOR STAFF

DeVille knows, Allen is surprised, Poole "What's happening?"

THE BOARD

Board Chairman L. D. McGehee and Bishop William B. Oden

WORKSHOPS

A Catholic priest leads a workshop on HIV-AIDS

Professionals, staff, clergy, and other adults attend

WORKCAMP

First UMC, Bossier City volunteers paint residence homes.

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION

District Superintendent Rev. James Poole and Board of Global Ministries Chairman Rev. George Duerson, meet as support is given to MCH summer workcamp.

JUST KIDS

All this is for the kids in residence and their futures.

Secretary, Robbie Wheat directed pageant

Angels in the annual Christmas pageant

The entire cast of characters take a bow

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate Gods Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Peace in the Midst of [Desert] Storm

My husband's mobilization into Operation Desert Storm on December 5 capped a series of stress-producing events that had begun in late summer. The secure world tbat undergirded my family life collapsed into the precariousness of future separations, income changes, and the looming dread of incipient war. At times, it seemed as if my primary way of dealing with each new challenge was by replacing it with an even greater one.

And yet in the midst of these roaring winds of uncertainty that continue to surround me, parachutes of God's grace drop regularly through the dark clouds, revealing the Sonshine above them. Daily — calls, letters, hugs, and other gestures of loving care fall into my life at the precise moment that I need spiritual uplifting. Over and over, Christian friends and acquaintances tell me that they are praying for us and all the others affected by this terrible war.

I believe them. We survive, even thrive, on others' pillow of prayers: on a cushion — as it were — of grace. Those who throw their loving arms of support around us show us God's mercy at its most nurturing best. Their witness — your witness — is a constant reminder of God's unceasing concern. In the center of tbe storm, because of these loving bonds of care, I can triumphantly say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer lives"; and with Habakkah, that I can "rejoice in the Lord; [and] be happy in the God of my salvation!" As the hymn so aptly declairs: It is well with my soul, it is well . . .

Sarah Kreutziger is Director of Communications, Louisiana Area. Her husband, Keith, currently is stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Dr. James J. Caraway Announces Retirement

The Reverend Dr. James J. "Jimmie" Caraway has announced to Bishop William B. Oden that he will be retiring at Annual Conference. Dr. Caraway has served as Executive Director of Administration of the Louisiana Annual Conference since 1979. His responsibilities include those of Conference Treasurer, Statistician, Executive Director of the Pensions and Insurance Program, and Conference Staff Liaison to the Conference Board of Trustees. Until last year, the job also included the directorship of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana.

Dr. Caraway serves on many finance and administrative committees on the Jurisdictional and General Conference levels as well. He is currently vice-president of the Jurisdictional Council of Finance and Administration (after serving as president and secretary previously); a member of the Executive Committee for the Jurisdiction (since 1980); and is a trustee of the Mount Sequoyah United Methodist Assembly.

Additionally, Dr. Caraway is a member of the General Council on Finance and Administration whose members also serve as general trustees of the Church. He is a member of the Investment Committee which meets quarterly to oversee the investment portfolios of tbe General Church. He is also a member of the Joint Budget Committee of the GCFA-GCOM which recommends the World Service budget to the General Conference and approves the General Program Agencies budget each year. He serves as chairperson of the Standing Committee on Nominations and as a member of the Joint GCFA-GCOM Committee on Review of General Agency Locations.

In the past, Dr. Caraway has served on the Board of Trustees for the St. Paul School of Theology, the Lydia Patterson Institute, and as Official Visitor to the Board of Trustees of his own Alma Mater, Southern Methodist University. He has also been president of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, president of LAMECO Federal Credit Union, Chairperson of the Conference Committee on Equitable Salaries, president of the Louisiana Conferchairperson of the Conference Committee on Equitable Salaries, president of tbe Louisiana Conference Centenary College Alumni Association, and Conference Youth Coordinator.

Dr. Caraway began his long and distinguished service to Louisiana United Methodism in 1949 after serving the North Texas Conference for two years. Before that he served in the Navy in World War II.

His "God-given gift" in finance administration surfaced in Perkins School of Theology when he began submitting systemmatic budgets from the churches he served as a student pastor. At Bunkie in one of his earlier pastorates, he and the Reverend John Koelemay developed the decimal formula still used to determine church apportionments. During this period in his ministry, he continued to serve otber churches and was District Superintendent twice.

Over time, his ministry was directed, he says, into positions of stewardship and finance within the Conference. By 1964, he began his service on the Conference Council of Finance and Administration which eventually led to his current position. When he became Conference Treasurer in 1979, the Conference had assets of one million dollars. Today, it has turned over ten-million dollars to the United Methodist Foundation, has tbree-million dollars worth of property, and three-million dollars for operation.

Dr. Caraway says that be bas experienced "deep satisfaction" for the eight-million dollars (out of the total sixteen million managed by the Conference) that is part of the Ministers' Pension Program. Witbout this investment, local churches would have found it necessary to contibute 20 percent more to tbeir apportionments.

His greatest contentment, however, has come from his ministry. "When we commit our gifts to God," Dr. Caraway says, "this is what brings real satisfaction in life." He was born in a Winnfield Methodist parsonage, has a brother and daughter in the ministry and two sons-in-law wbo are also pastors. "All I know is the Methodist Church. It's been my life." Not surprisingly, he plans to continue to serve the cburch voluntarily after retirement, but emphatically states that be and his wife, Carol, are going on an around-the-world trip first!

Dr. James J. Caraway

Bishop Oden, in announcing Dr. Caraway's retirement, expressed deep appreciation for the work he has done. "It obviously is taking several people already to fill his shoes." When asked about the positions next director, Bishop Oden replied that he "will be working with the leadership of the CFA, the Board of Pensions, and the Cabinet in naming a successor." While there will be no formal advertisement or solicitation of candidates, according to the Bishop, "interested laity" or clergy are invited to immediately contact the Bishops' Office if interested."

Bishop Oden Installed as President of Louisiana Interchurch Conference

Bishop William B. Oden was installed as president of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference (LIC) during its annual meeting, January 22-23 in Lafayette at First United Methodist Church. This state-wide ecumenical body welcomed the Reverend Dr. J. Robert Nelson as its keynote speaker and also served as the forum for the announcement by the Reverend James L. Stovall of his resignation as LIC's executive director after fifteen years of dedicated service.

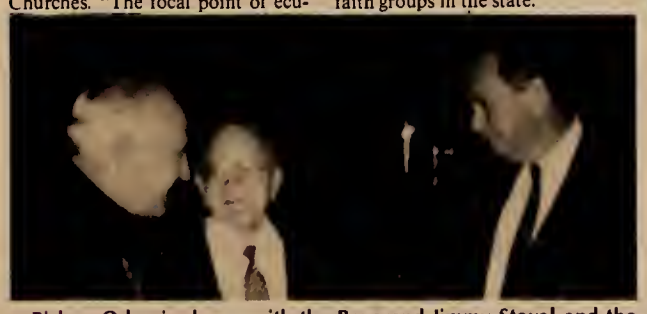
Louisiana's 21-year-old interfaith conference includes in its membership 23 different religious groups and denominations. Both clergy and laity work together through committees in the spheres of faith and doctrine as well as social concerns.

Dr. Nelson's two addresses and sermon to the assembly underscored this work as he outlined the international progress of ecumenical work through 50 years of commitment by the World Council of Churches. "The focal point of ecumenical dialogue has been Jesus Christ," he stated, and "there is a new openness today to ecumenism."

The assembly also paid tribute to United Methodist Clergyman, the Reverend James L. Stovall of Baton Rouge. Mr. Stovall has been an untiring leader, speaker, lobbyist, organizer, and advocate for Louisiana's churches; ecumenism, religious and social issues during his tenure. He will step down from his post on May 1.

The search for a new executive director offers a new challenge to LIC according to its new president. Bishop Oden says that "the search for a new executive director forces LIC to evaluate its entire messue and structure which is a healthy process that every institution should go through periodically."

Bishop Oden adds, however, that he "looks forward to his year as president of 'the most representative religious organization of all faith groups in the state.' "



Bishop Oden is shown with the Reverend Jimmy Stoval and the Reverend Dr. J. Robert Nelson, shown at left.

The Louisiana Gathering: A Celebration of God's Grace!

The worship experience of the Louisiana Gathering will be "a celebration of the overwhelming grace of God," according to the Reverend John Winn, who designed the service with his wife, the Reverend Carole Cotton-Winn.

"God keeps calling us to be his people," Mr. Winn says, and the Gathering is a chance to share time that "we need together with each other" to re-experience the overpowering presence of God's call.

With grace undergirding the worship experience, celebration is the product. The Louisiana Gathering will "celebrate the wonderful diversity of the Church in Louisiana." The Reverend Carole Cotton-Winn is especially excited about the "splendor and majesty" of the Festival of Banners representing the 600 churches in the Conference. "It will be a memory that people will cherish," she says. Likewise, the bringing forth of the vision and mission statement from each church, Mrs. Winn continues, will be "a sacred moment: an offering to God."

The overriding theme of the Gathering also is representative of Louisiana Methodism. "Yes, We'll Gather at the River!" was selected by the Worship Committee because it is symbolic of the importance of water in our state as well as in our faith. The service will incorporate both elements of meaning in its worship.

"Water," Mr. Winn reminds us, "is an abiding symbol in Christian tradition of cleansing and renewal." The site of the Gathering on the Mississippi River reinforces that meaning in the life that the River gives to the state. Participants are to "re-experience the waters of their baptism," according to Mrs. Winn. "Each person will remember their baptism and be thankful: a chance again to touch the living waters."

Above all, the central focus of the Gathering moves beyond "superficial worship," say the Winns. The experience will "stir memories of old-time revivals for those who want revival; respect the quiet peace of the soul for those who want renewal; and revel in great preaching for those who want to be moved." The Gatbering, in effect, as part of the Lenten season, opens each individual spirit to the celebration of the message at Easter.

Convocation of Boards Held in Baton Rouge

Bishop Robert Morgan of Mississippi opened the Louisiana Conference Convocation of Boards at a Thursday-night dinner with a rousing sermon mirroring the Council of Bishops' new initiative, "Vital Congregations: Faithful Disciples." With the second chapter of Acts as his text, Bishop Morgan listed seven signs of vital congregational faith for the assembly which met in Baton Rouge, January 31-February 1.

Vital faith comes, said the Bishop, when individuals 1) surrender their lives to Christ unreservedly, 2) thirst for Christ openly, 3) worship God uninhibitedly, 4) burn with God's spirit inextinguishably, 5) love people unconditionally, 6) witness their faith unashamedly, and 7) reach out undauntedly. We must, he declared, have a vision large enough to reach "people on the other side of the mountains."

Bishop William B. Oden underscored Bishop Morgan's emphasis on vital faith in a talk that transferred the Episcopal initiative into the specifics of Louisiana United Methodism. He cited the overwhelming response of local churches to the Pastoral Letter he sent out in support of our troops in Operation Desert Storm as evidence of the Church's vital piety.

Bishop Oden also reminded the assembly of the exciting plans ahead for the Church as part of VISION 2000. The Louisiana Gathering to be held on March 9 will be, he said, "a day of revival and renewal when the Spirit of God will touch Louisiana Methodism in a mighty way! The Gathering," he continued, "is not tbe end; it's the beginning" of exciting times ahead. The evening session closed with Holy Communion.

On Friday, the programming Boards of the Conference came together at First United Methodist Church to evaluate their 1990 projects and events and to project and plan for 1991. Included in the Council of Ministries' itineracy were portions of VISION 2000.

The Reverend Dr. Charles B. Simmons, Chairman of the Council on Ministries, cited "real movement" in the development' of VISION 2000 programming by the various committees and boards for the next ten years as the assembly's most significant accomplishment.

Dr. Simmons also noted the "genuine sense of purpose" in this exceptionally productive meeting. He was also impressed by the "breadth and depth" of fellowship in this well-attended event.

Bishop Robert C. Morgan

Bishop William B. Oden

March Conference Calendar

1	Church Women United, World Day of Prayer
1-3	United Methodist Women Conference Retreat, Tall Timbers
1-3	United Methodist Women West Gulf Regional School Planning Committee Meeting
3-5	Shepherd's Visit — Lake Charles District
3-6	"Mapping Adult Faith Journey" Workshop
5-6	Lydia Patterson Institute Board of Trustees Meeting, El Paso, Texas
6	Drew University Informational Meeting regarding the Doctor of Ministry Program, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
9	The Louisiana Gathering: A Celebration of Covenant Renewal, Baton Rouge Centroplex
10	Local Churches — Covenant Renewal Service
10	One Great Hour of Sharing
11	Legislative Liaison Committee, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
12-14	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
14-16	Church Women United State Assembly, First Presbyterian Church, Lake Charles
16	Acadiana District Board of Laity Luncheon, First Church, Lafayette, 11:30 a.m.

Methodist Home of New Orleans Special page on page 6. (page 5 in local editions)

Letters to the Editor

Readers say Persian Gulf war is not 'just'

EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to a large influx of letters recently, the Reporter this week gives extended space to readers' opinions regarding the Persian Gulf war. These letters represent a sampling of responses we've received to our recent editorials and reports on war-related issues.

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, original and carry the signature and address of the author. Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What a surprise and a disappointment to find an editorial, "War in Middle East: Struggling anew with an old dilemma," affirming the Persian Gulf war as just (see UMR, Jan. 25).

You know, of course, that you have departed from the stand of the National Council of Churches and most major denominations.

The doctrine as used by both Roman Catholic and United Methodist bishops differs from your outline.

"Just war" doctrine says war must be a last resort. Can anyone truly say that the Persian Gulf war is? We could have given more time for the sanctions to work. Our having 500,000 troops there led to a military determinism and not a last resort policy.

The doctrine says war must discriminate between combatants and non-combatants. The media has done a good job of trying to convince us of the accuracy of our "surgical strikes." However, can war with modern weaponry really do this? Recent evidence has shown a huge civilian casualty count.

The criterion of proportionality is also part of "just war" theory which you mentioned but chose not to evaluate. What good can you imagine coming out of the war that would justify the havoc, the suffering, and the deaths that are mounting? All scenarios point to regional instability, Arab rage and terrorism on a grand scale.

"Just war" theory also requires we know what conceivable "success" we can anticipate. It appears to me and to many that we are in a no-win situation and that the sooner we recognize this the better.

Yes, we need to respect the opinions of others but I somehow expect a church-related publication to be more in harmony with peacemaking than warmaking. Among all groups I would hope that the church would be the first to recognize that war is obsolete as a means for settling international disputes.

George Ricker
San Marcos, Texas

Key missing

Regarding your editorial "War in Middle East: Struggling anew with an old dilemma" (see UMR, Jan. 25), I would first of all suggest that one of the key elements of the "just war" criteria is missing from your list—last resort, which requires that every possibility of peaceful settlement of a conflict must be tried before war is begun (from the United Methodist Council of Bishops' pastoral document, "In Defense of Creation").

It seems to me that President Bush's claim of having gone the last mile on the diplomatic route to resolve the crisis flies in the face of reality since he made it clear on every step of that route that there would be "no negotiations."

So with this element added to your listed criteria, I come up with a "justification" score of, at best, 3 out of 7. The three elements that one might be able to make a case for are "legitimate authority," "probability of success" and "discrimination" (avoiding civilian targets). I find your claim incredible that "from a just war perspective our nations' leaders have chosen a morally defensible course of action."

Sadly, by President Bush's precipitous action in getting us into this war, the world has missed an opportunity to attempt to defeat aggression by sanctions and diplomacy which, if successful, could have led to the development of a truly "new world order" that would have some hope of achieving the peace on earth and good will toward all of God's people that we all so earnestly desire.

W.R. Gilfry
Erie, Pennsylvania

Defying God

Surely this war is nothing less than organized direct defiance of God's command: "You shall not murder (Exodus 20:12)." As the killing continues in the Persian Gulf region, it is hoped that Christian ministers will not only proclaim the Gospel and pray for peace, but will not shrink from declaring the judgment, "Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword (Matthew 26:52)."

To our church spokespersons, teachers and ethicists who are trying to put a decent face on this calamity I quote from the great Oxford Conference in 1936: "War involves compulsory enmity, diabolical outrage against human personality, and a wanton distortion of the truth. War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in this world and a defiance of the righteousness of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. No justification of war must be allowed to minimize this fact. War is the supreme social sin."

Let the ministers of our church patiently bear the agony of this terrible time without blessing our nation's policy, urging our people to pray for our enemies and holding fast to the message of Christ and Him crucified.

Robert A. Mulligan
Savoy, Illinois

While this soldier's helmet conveys a prayer for God's blessings, many UMR readers are questioning the application of Christian "just war" principles to U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf.

War is incompatible

In your Jan. 25 editorial "War in Middle East: Struggling anew with old dilemma," you claim that pacifism is a position taken by a "minority" of Christians. Haven't you read our Social Principles lately? They state: "We believe war is incompatible with the teachings of and example of Christ." In our opinion, that says it all.

Dana Horrell and Marti Swords
Brookfield, Illinois

I am furious

I am furious with President Bush's talk of a "game plan," as though the slaughter of thousands of human beings is a "game."

There is an immorality about the Persian Gulf war that is appalling. We are not being told about Iraqi casualties, yet we know they are at least in the hundreds. We are being prepared for acceptance of ground fighting that will result in the deaths of thousands or tens of thousands. When will it end?

I call for a cease-fire and negotiations—yes, even now. It is never "too late." The deaths of so many people because of the stubbornness of nations' leaders is not justified. Our president alone can put a pause in the war; we know Saddam will not.

Robert J. Hawthorne
San Jose, California

You did poor job

I was very disappointed in the editorial of Jan. 25, "War in the Middle East: Struggling anew with old dilemma." I felt you did a very poor job of presenting the pacifist approach.

Pacifists do not just oppose the use of force. They are not negative people; they are positive and active. They act in a positive way to seek a society that is peaceful and just. They confront injustice and evil and oppression with non-violence. You gave little credit to pacifism and gave no encouragement to a person to become a pacifist.

All of the problems that existed in the Middle East will still be there after the war and made far worse. I believe you didn't give much help to Christians struggling with this dilemma. We now need an editorial on how Christians can and should shape the new world order after the war is over.

Margaret Fertschneider
Atascadero, California

My Witness

I question our role in Mideast conflict

By O. EUGENE SLATER

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Retired Bishop O. Eugene Slater of Dallas served the Kansas, San Antonio and Northwest Texas-New Mexico episcopal areas.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

On this pleasant Sunday afternoon, I am thinking about the tragic war in the Persian Gulf, and about the men and women caught up in the danger of that conflict.

What would I do if I were involved in the decision-making process? Frankly, I do not know. I belong to that minority group which urged that we and our allies continue the strategy of using sanctions against Iraq for a longer period of time. But the majority called for the use of force and the majority prevailed. The question, at present, appears to be "when will the ground phase of the war begin?"

In this brief word, I am not suggesting answers. I am asking questions, among them, these:

Do we have a clear understanding of our objective? Is it simply to drive Iraq out of Kuwait? Or are there economic issues involved in our objective?

Can we economically afford this war?

Is a victory over Iraq worth the loss of a single person, be that person an Iraqi, an American, or a citizen of any one of our allies?

How can our prayers for our sons and daughters, now in Saudi Arabia, be joined with our efforts, under God, to bring about peace, and preserve the lives of our loved ones?

Is it possible for Americans to disagree with one another over issues and policies related to the war, without questioning one another's patriotism?

Is there any connection between our conflict with Iraq and the ultimate necessity of establishing a home for the Palestinians?

When the war is over, will we be prepared to work toward reconciliation with those we now call our enemies?

Even now, do we pray for our enemies?

Is there a better way to solve the problems that arise between nations? Are there other options available to us?

I raise these questions as one deeply disturbed, and as one who seeks, however haltingly, to follow the Prince of Peace, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

What others are saying

"Someone was reading aloud one night in London when John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed. We don't know the reader's name, but we know the reading's result. . . . Our names may not become household words because we serve God faithfully. We may never know all the good that we do. God knows. That's enough. And then those who don't know us will owe us."
—The Rev. Tom Slack, communications director of the West Ohio conference

* * *

"Do we want to feel good or do good? If we call for an unconditional cease-fire, we buy cheap grace that solves nothing. Issues remain unresolved and we may end up with a bigger and more extensive war. If we want to do good, we call for a just cease-fire in the context of the United Nations resolution for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, and then hold a conference to address all issues including those of the Palestinian people."
—Church of England Bishop Tom Butler, delegate to the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia.

* * *

"If the U.S. government thinks (Iraq president) Saddam Hussein should get out of Kuwait, why doesn't it get out of Panama?"
—Mexican Methodist Bishop Raul Ruiz Avila, delegate to the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia.

* * *

"The Lent I choose is not to go off into a corner—whether a monastery or a mountain—but to go into the world and, with greater persistence, try to help another person—not passing by on the other side pretending not to see, but going where people are and trying to bind up their wounds with tenderness."
—The Rev. Marshall Ketchum, Rowland, Calif.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Hebrews 11:1)

Readings for week of Feb. 25
Monday: Psalms 105:1-6
Tuesday: Psalms 105:7-11
Wednesday: Genesis 17:1-10
Thursday: Genesis 17:15-19
Friday: Mark 8:31-33
Saturday: Mark 8:34-38
Sunday: Romans 4:16-25

Here I Stand

We need to live up to the ideals of 'family'

By JOHN KINGSBURY

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. John Kingsbury is a member of Smoky Hill United Methodist Church in Aurora, Colo. (Rocky Mountain Annual Conference).

I have often heard, along with many others, the terms "Christian community" and "building community" used within churches and church organizations. Along with those many other individuals, I have struggled with achieving the goals found in the definitions of those terms. The rewards of those labors have been deeply appreciated and heartwarming.

The closeness and concern that has been achieved by certain congregations, and that has seemed to elude others, has been a standard and a goal for Christian groups since the time that Christ set the original standard. The goal of Christian community has been, and probably will continue to be, an unobtainable goal for many groups and local congregations.

What about those churches that obtain that goal? What next? Certainly we must continue to maintain and promote the values and practices of Christian community, which must be an ongoing struggle. I have come to realize, however, that there is a next step for our local churches.

Recently I helped develop a mission statement for our local church. Not wanting a lengthy statement, we were debating the use of certain terms at the expense of others. We wanted to put across the feeling of community within our congregation, but over and over, the term "family" kept coming back to us. We adopted it and use it to describe our congregation, whenever possible, much as other churches do.

In adopting that description, each church gives itself a whole new set of lofty goals. This standard is significantly past that of Christian community. It connotes warmth and unconditional love beyond that felt in many congregations. To meet that standard and live up to those self-imposed goals, we are going to need to do several things.

- We will need to greet others, both regular attenders and first-time visitors, openly, warmly and genuinely.
- We will need to sense each other's hurts and needs and provide the actions to soothe those pains and ministries to meet those needs.
- We will need to approach and work with each other much as we would with a brother or a sister, or a father or a mother.

In short, we need to travel beyond Christian community to the concept of church family.

Many of the members of our church families don't have their biological families living near them. For some, the distance doesn't come in miles, but in estrangements or unwillingness to communicate or to function as a family. Some are struggling in single-parent family units.

Others yet are struggling in traditional double-parent family units. For them, and for the rest of our local congregations, we have to create, maintain and evaluate atmospheres that allow the terms "church families" and "church homes" to be genuine descriptions rather than far-off goals.

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

PRESBYTERIANS PRO-CHOICE: In what is being called the first extensive, scientific survey of Presbyterians' opinions, a denominational panel has found that a majority of those queried supported women's right to legal abortion, but under limited circumstances. Fewer than 10 percent favor available abortions at all times for all reasons. The subcommittee which commissioned the study will report findings to the 1992 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

BAPTISTS REPORT GAINS: Southern Baptists report increases in several aspects of church life for 1990. They reported an increase of 9.7 percent to 385,031 baptisms. Church membership grew by 0.9 percent to 15,044,413, and Sunday school enrollment rose by the same percentage to 8,009,498. Total giving rose 6 percent, or $258.49 million, to $4.567 billion in 1990.

IRAQIS SEEK PEACE: A delegation of Iraqi Christian leaders is on a world tour seeking peace in the Persian Gulf. Scheduled stops included Rome, Canterbury (seat of the worldwide Anglican Communion) and the United States. They also stopped in Geneva to ask for the help of the World Council of Churches, headquartered there, in getting churches all over the world to actively seek to restore peace.

POPE GREETS WCC: Pope John Paul II sent written greetings to the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting Feb. 7-20 in Canberra, Australia. He acknowledged the "urgency of the ecumenical task." The Roman Catholic Church, with 23 "delegated observers" at the assembly, does not belong to the 316-member World Council of Churches but holds full membership in the WCC's Faith and Order Commission which deals primarily with the theological bases for church unity.

John Paul II

WHAT 'CONCORDAT'?: A "concordat" that would bring the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America into the closest possible union short of merger is encountering some strong opposition in the Lutheran stronghold of the Upper Midwest. The most controversial aspect of the concordat is a recommendation that Lutherans, like Episcopalians, adopt the concept of the "historic episcopate." Under that understanding, the church's bishops are seen as links in the chain of "apostolic succession"—an unbroken chain of followers of Christ leading back to the original apostles, representing the continuity and unity of the church.

DISCIPLES PICK FUND-RAISER: The Rev. William C. Blackwell of Springfield, Va., has been named major-gifts director for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) $30 million churchwide capital fund-raising campaign. At the time of his retirement in 1989, Mr. Blackwell had been senior minister of First Christian Church of Hagerstown, Md., for eight years. During his tenure there, the church was among the denomination's top 10 in basic mission finance giving. He also served churches in Kentucky, West Virginia, Iowa and the District of Columbia.

READY FOR ATTACK: The Lutheran World Federation (relief organization) hospital on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem has installed outside high-pressure showers to wash chemicals from victims of such a military attack. Two chemical- or gas-safe rooms have been installed, and hospital employees have been assigned places they may live near the hospital in the event of catastrophe.

Compiled from news and staff reports

WCC hits 'flashpoint' on 'syncretism'

Korean woman theologian's actions dramatize issues of faith and culture

WCC Assembly Stories by STEPHEN L. SWECKER Associate Editor

CANBERRA, Australia—Midway through the Feb. 7-20 Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, some 1,000 delegates and 2,500 other participants ran head-on into a paradox of the ecumenical movement.

The paradox is this: That the search for Christian unity can expose, and even heighten, divisions within the body of Christ.

The literal flashpoint occurred during a presentation by a Korean female theologian.

Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung, a Presbyterian, received a standing ovation following a creative and dramatic presentation on the assembly's theme, "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation."

"Let us listen to the cries of creation and the cries of the Spirit within it," said Dr. Chung as she stood center stage of the Royal Theater, a meeting hall in Canberra's National Convention Centre.

The diminutive theologian, who received part of her theological training at United Methodist-related Claremont School of Theology in California, then called out names of biblical figures, Christians and others in history who had experienced tragic deaths.

Following her call to the spirits of the deceased, the flashpoint occurred: Dr. Chung burned the list of those whom she had named and wafted the ashes skyward in a display that reminded some of pagan rituals.

Most Orthodox and some northern European Protestant participants were angered by what they afterwards called her demonstration of "syncretism" (blending faith and culture) and "paganism" (see related story).

Among their objections were Dr. Chung's sympathetic references to Kwan In, an East Asian women's goddess.

According to Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorious, an Orthodox prelate and one of seven WCC presidents, Dr. Chung's controversial presentation helped focus unease among many Orthodox participants over what they viewed as "a secularized, liberalized view of the Gospel." They said they also detected this in other parts of the assembly.

Dr. Chung reacted to such criticism by stating that the issue was not primarily theological. Rather, she said, the issue is "a problem of power: who has the power to define the Holy Spirit?" Theology is no longer the prerogative of "privileged classes," she said.

United Methodist theologian the Rev. J. Robert Nelson, a longtime participant in WCC affairs and an accredited visitor to the Canberra assembly, cited the Chung episode as an example of what can happen when the focal point of a worldwide Christian meeting is such an "elusive and amorphous" theme as the Holy Spirit.

"By definition, the spirit can't be visualized. We can only refer to it by analogies such as wind, fire, etc.," Dr. Nelson said.

"A real danger exists in ascribing to the Holy Spirit any discovery of 'spirit' that we might talk about," he added.

Dr. Nelson said that he was "apprehensive" for similar reasons about the assembly's "exhaltation of the spirituality of Aborigines" (see related story)—an apprehension shared particularly by Orthodox participants, who make up 21 percent of the assembly's voting members.

"That's one problem with some interfaith dialogue: seeing 'spirit' in all religion," Dr. Nelson said.

United Methodist Bishop Roy I. Sano (Denver Area), a delegate to the assembly, said that, despite the "hazards" Dr. Chung's presentation might create, it was "one of the holy moments of this assembly."

It remained to be seen what effects, if any, the controversy over Dr. Chung's presentation would have on the outcome of the Canberra assembly, particularly on the vital matter of "visible unity" that tops the list of purposes the WCC has adopted for itself.

World Council of Churches gathers 'down under'

CANBERRA, Australia—Representatives of Australia's Aboriginal peoples (top) open the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches with a traditional ceremony of greeting. Issues relating to Australia's treatment of Aborigines were a major focus of the meeting (see related story on this page). At right, the Rev. J. Robert Nelson of Houston and college professor Janice Love of Columbia, S.C., are United Methodists at the assembly. Dr. Nelson, an accredited visitor, has attended all seven assemblies since the WCC's formation in 1948. Dr. Love, part of the official U.S. delegation, serves on the WCC executive committee.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY STEPHEN L. SWECKER

How threatening is faith, culture blend?

CANBERRA, Australia—How threatening is "syncretism"—the blending of Christianity with non-Christian beliefs and practices—to the church's mission and search for unity?

Considerable debate and related tensions at the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches turned on that underlying question.

South Korean theologian Chung Hyun-Kyung reflected a benign view of such tensions.

She contrasted what she labeled the "traditional image" of the church's mission—"dropping the seed of the Gospel on foreign soil and allowing it to take root and grow"—and another image that she said was less passive: "making babies."

"The relationship of the Gospel to culture is like making a baby, that is, making something new rather than simply planting a seed in soil," Dr. Chung said.

A Russian Orthodox scholar, Nicholas Lossky, acknowledged that there are "temptations" toward syncretism within the WCC and that some Christian traditions, including his own, view them with concern.

Nevertheless, Dr. Lossky said, ecumenical work implies dialogue with people of different traditions and cultures. The task, he said, is to find criteria for discerning what is fundamental from what is secondary.

Aboriginal people: a powerful presence

CANBERRA, Australia—As they entered the cavernous tent that would be the site for worship services during the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, participants passed through a plume of smoke made by burning leaves.

This encounter with a traditional cleansing process for the indigenous people of Australia—the Aborigines—introduced WCC delegates and visitors to an ongoing emphasis throughout the Feb. 7-20 Canberra assembly: the spirituality and culture of Aboriginal peoples.

The latter included their claim to basic human rights and to land they regard themselves as entitled to as the Australian continent's first inhabitants.

Their prior claim to the land was dramatized even further minutes before the opening worship service actually began.

Instead of a standard welcome from the Australian government, Aboriginal elders ritually granted the WCC permission to enter the land. Only then did worship leaders process into the white canvas tent.

This was merely the beginning of an ecumenical meeting steeped in the Aboriginal presence.

Throughout the assembly, that presence was a source of both startling creativity and, at times, of painful challenge.

WCC participants experienced the creativity of the Aborigines in myriad ways, both within worship services and during special programs to introduce them to the ancient Aboriginal culture, traced as far back as 45,000 B.C.

At various times, the twin sites of the Canberra meeting—the campus of the Australian National University and the downtown National Convention Centre—throbbed with native songs and dances.

A special exhibition of Aboriginal art at the Australian High Court building in connection with the WCC meeting provided dramatic insights into Aborigine spirituality, such as their near-mystical relationship to the land.

And, during a multi-media plenary session of the assembly that introduced WCC participants to the history of Aborigines—including mostly shameful treatment by European settlers and Christian missionaries alike—Aboriginal leaders presented four native paintings to the WCC's chief executive, the Rev. Emilio Castro.

Children lead adults in WCC worship events

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY STEPHEN L. SWECKER

CANBERRA, Australia—Children carrying a globe-shaped balloon lead a silent processional through the streets of Australia's capital in the opening ceremony of the WCC Seventh Assembly. Participants say the children's efforts made a significant witness at the gathering.

CANBERRA, Australia—Children led them—"them" being the 3,500 participants at the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

An observation by 13-year-old Travis Gillett of Melbourne, Australia, following a children-led worship service in the assembly's gigantic "worship tent" applied equally to other events during the Feb. 7-20 ecumenical gathering.

"Instead of the adults leading the children, the children were leading the adults," he said with obvious satisfaction.

More than 50 children contributed to the service to which Travis referred. Most were Australian participants in a children's camp conducted in connection with the assembly.

They wrote the service, selected the music and prepared artwork to illustrate the theme for the morning: the unity of the body of Christ.

A highlight was a crisply coordinated reading of 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 during which children played the roles of the foot, ear, eye and head which Paul taught are intertwined and inseparable.

United Methodist Mary Lou Grove of Charleston, W.Va., an accredited visitor to the assembly, expressed appreciation for this and other contributions made by children.

"One of the most meaningful parts of the assembly has been the participation of children," Mrs. Grove said. "They give us hope."

Young people were highly visible in ways other than worship.

They led a silent "peace processional" of assembly participants through the streets of Canberra, carrying a large inflated world globe as a symbol of the theme of the two-week WCC event: "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation."

A group of children from Australia and other countries addressed a plenary session of the assembly. They sang and read a list of requests to make the world safer and better for children.

Also, WCC participants received in their information packets upon registration handwritten letters of welcome from Australian children, including invitations to attend church during their visit to Australia.

Even the media were affected. Almost certainly the youngest accredited journalist at the assembly was 13-year-old Kathlijne Lefevere of Tenafly, N.J.

Kathlijne accompanied her mother, Patricia, a free-lance writer assigned to cover the assembly for numerous publications in the U.S. and elsewhere. The United Church of Canada "Observer" assigned Kathlijne to write an assembly-related article for its children's page.

United Methodist Bishop Roy I. Sano (Denver Area), a delegate to the assembly, said that the wide participation of children in the assembly was an important witness.

"I think we've seen a very clear application of the biblical wisdom that 'a child shall lead them'," Bishop Sano said.

On a related matter, more than 300 youth participants at the assembly issued a statement expressing concern about the traditional role that young people typically are assigned in the church. The statement said in part:

"We are often deprived of freedom by our churches which render us voiceless, powerless and marginalized in the name of 'experience' and 'knowledge'. We believe, however, that experience and knowledge are not wisdom, and that the Spirit of Truth is not limited to any age, gender, or other category of person."

"Unite the two so long disjoined: knowledge and vital piety"

— Charles Wesley

Duke Divinity School announces for the fall of 1991 a Master of Theology in Spirituality program, available on a full- and part-time basis for clergy and laity. Program includes courses in Christian Formation, The Spiritual Life, Roots of Evangelicalism, Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and The Lord's Prayer. This degree offering is made possible by the Campbell-Dowse Fund for Spirituality.

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Faith connections

NEW UMCOR HEAD: The Rev. R. Bruce Weaver, superintendent of the North Texas conference's Dallas-Denton District, has been named interim director of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, effective Feb. 18. He succeeds Norma Kehrberg, who returned to Nepal as senior consultant for an ecumenical mission agency there. Dr. Weaver, 69, became recognized as an expert in church-related disaster relief after leading a months-long ecumenical recovery effort from a tornado at Wichita Falls, Texas, in 1979.

Bruce Weaver

PEACE ACTIVIST DIES: The Rev. Robert Horton, retired member of United Methodism's Western New York Annual Conference and a lifelong peace activist, died recently in Philadelphia at age 90. During the 1960s, following nearly 30 years in the pastorate, he was peace education secretary for the American Friends Service Committee. Also during that period he expanded his longtime work of visiting conscientious objectors by organizing the Prisoner Visitation and Support Group. That group lists 125 volunteers who spend a day or more a month visiting prisoners.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED: A call to clarify the United Methodist Church's position on abortion heads a list of 10 issues the evangelical Good News caucus will take to the denomination's top legislative body meeting in Louisville, Ky., in 1992. The caucus's executive secretary, the Rev. James V. Heidinger, said evangelicals in the church disagree with those who interpret the current statement as "pro-choice." "We need to come out strongly as being pro-life," he said.

CONSULTANT KILLED: The Rev. Earl H. Miller, one of United Methodism's foremost advocates of persons with handicapping conditions, was hit and killed Feb. 13 by a car as he attempted to cross a four-lane thoroughfare in Oklahoma City. Mr. Miller, who lived in Black Hawk, Colo., was serving the denomination's Board of Global Ministries as a part-time consultant on persons with handicapping conditions. He was co-chairperson of the churchwide Association of Physically Challenged Ministers of the United Methodist Church. He was a retired member of the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference and had limited mobility based on polio contracted at age 22.

ARGENTINE BISHOP DIES: Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri, 90, died Feb. 13 in Buenos Aires. He was one of six presidents elected at the World Council of Churches' Second Assembly in 1954, in Evanston, Ill. He held a B.A. degree in philosophy, an M.A. degree in Old Testament, and a B.D. in church history at Southern Methodist University and an M.A. degree in New Testament at Emory University in Atlanta. He supervised Methodist work in Argentina, Bolivia and Uruguay from 1949 until he retired in 1970.

STUDY PANELIST QUITS: One advocate for retaining The United Methodist Church's denunciation of homosexual practice has resigned from the churchwide committee studying the issue. Dr. James V. Holsinger Jr. of Washington submitted his resignation the morning after a "preference vote" by the 25-member committee (see UMR, Feb. 15) showed 17 in favor of removing present language; 4, including Dr. Holsinger, in favor of retaining the language; 2 abstentions; and 2 absent. In his resignation statement, Dr. Holsinger said he intended to work against relaxing the church's stance on homosexuality and couldn't in good conscience continue to remain a member of the study panel.

James Holsinger

Compiled from news and staff reports

One year after Hugo, ministry needs abound

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

CHARLESTON, S.C.—Trouble can be good for you, say some United Methodists in the South Carolina Annual Conference. It can show you new opportunities for ministry.

As evidence they cite Hurricane Hugo. When it hit South Carolina Sept. 21, 1989, it packed 135 mph winds and water as high as 15 feet. The hurricane caused $6 billion in damages in 19 counties. Among its property victims were most churches in the Charleston area.

The storm also revealed several "pockets of poverty" and some of South Carolina's worst living conditions.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

WADMALAW ISLAND, S.C.—Micheal LaRohe, owner of Cherrypoint Seafood Company near Charleston, shows an example of fish he catches to feed the poor in South Carolina's sea-island community. United Methodist General Board of Ministries staff and directors visited his dock-side business as part of a tour during United Methodist Committee on Relief meetings in the Charleston area.

Peeked inside 'pockets'

During their winter meeting last month in Charleston, United Methodist Committee on Relief elected directors peeked inside those "pockets" to find new outreach ministries. They also assessed where the church's current recovery efforts are being focused.

In the rural sea-island communities just outside Charleston, church relief leaders learned that there were homes with no running water, no septic tanks, no kitchens, and no electrical power—not even before Hurricane Hugo.

"The physical damage has been immeasurable," said the Rev. Lee Bines of the Rock Hill, S.C., cooperative parish.

"One thing we realized is that we are limited," he continued. "In a crisis, no matter how well we do, it is not enough. We realized we needed more preparation because we were not ready for Hugo. But in our weakness, He made us strong. We realized that the Lord can still work."

Mr. Bines told UMCOR directors there is a strong sense of leadership in the conference. That includes high visibility by Bishop Joseph B. Bethea (South Carolina Area); the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, director of the South Carolina council on ministries, and district leaders. Leadership also came from UMCOR's disaster response staff.

'Because of you'

"We were able to come this far because of you, your prayers, your assistance, and your resources," said Mr. Bines to the churchwide relief group.

Ms. Henry-Crowe said thousands of people responded to the United Methodist call for help in South Carolina, especially UM volunteers-in-mission work teams.

One work team from another denomination read an article about the United Methodist relief efforts and traveled from Kimball, Minn., just to repair homes damaged by the hurricane.

Under leadership of Danny Howe—a master carpenter from First Broad Street UMC in Kingsport, Tenn.—families who could not afford home repairs saw "true Christians in action," said Anderson Mack Jr. of Johns Island, S.C. He coordinates an ecumenical rural mission program supported by United Methodists.

In a report to UMCOR, Ms. Henry-Crowe said the hurricane helped the conference realize the need for a detailed response plan in advance of any disaster. That includes hurricanes, tornadoes, forest fires, floods, earthquakes, ice/snow storms, transportation accidents, and nuclear accidents.

Plan book ready

In the Hartsville district, for example, Elsie Trantham has compiled a book with a local plan and a list of district leaders with their responsibilities by name and telephone number. She stressed that this plan needs to be updated yearly.

Ms. Trantham told the Reporter that her district—a five-county area containing 106 UM churches—spent $45,000 in UMCOR funds from Sept. 1989 through Aug. 31, 1990. Through that mission money:

- 173 homes were repaired;
- 39 work teams repaired homes;
- 89 families were assisted with money for building materials, food, medicine, rent, and utility bills in the first 12 months after the hurricane.

The Hartsville district also received assistance from several United Methodist volunteer-in-mission teams. Those teams generated an additional $56,000 for roofing work to homes in Sumter County.

"We have learned to turn defeat into success," Ms. Trantham said. "God expects us to make plans and train our people to do them."

Camping ministries affirmed

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

PALESTINE, Texas—Amid the joy and surprise of a $90 million pledge to United Methodist camping ministries (see UMR, Feb. 15) came strong, new affirmation of those ministries.

Bishop Ben Oliphint (Houston Area), in his talk at the recent national meeting of camp leaders at Lakeview Methodist Conference, called camping "one of the most life changing, significant experiences in the whole church."

New directions in camping ministry strongly parallel the needs of the church, said Kathy Trotter, chairperson of the church's National Camping Committee.

Many ministers in every annual conference say they made their first commitment to God at church camp, she continued.

Camping ministry is not separate from the local church but very much a part of it, she said.

However, camp leaders find themselves increasingly challenged by the complexity of managing learning experiences, group living and property, she said.

Among the most valuable assets in any annual conference are its camping facilities, Ms. Trotter said.

"But camps are not high profile politically, so it is hard on camp people when they are asked to manage this large and risky asset with no money."

They receive little money for their work, she said, adding that camp manager positions continue on the middle to lower end of the pastoral salary scale.

"What is involved (in managing camps) is very deceiving," she said. "The more successful we are, the simpler it looks."

Ms. Trotter said she hopes conferences will recognize that camp management is a ministry that requires special expertise.

"Conferences cannot afford to subsidize a failing operation," she said, "so we would hope bishops and superintendents will be careful to place people there who have the appropriate skills."

As apportionment payments from local churches decline, money is harder to get, she said. But, she added, camps can be in a better position than many ministries because of the services they offer and the revenue they earn from use of the facilities.

But, she continued, camping is requiring much more astute management.

Kathy Trotter
. . .valuable assets

Conferences which assign a problem pastor to run camping facilities are "shooting themselves in the foot," she said.

Trends in camping activities change over time, several workshop leaders at the meeting said.

Counselors and camp leaders have to have special training to lead these activities.

Camp settings can also be valuable for spiritual formation retreats, several leaders said.

Liberia peace pact hailed for missions

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A new peace accord and new relief efforts are great signs of hope in Liberia, says Lloyd Rollins of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Mr. Rollins and the Rev. R. Dean Hancock of the General Board of Global Ministries were in Sierra Leone and Liberia this month to map out major relief efforts for the church's Liberia Annual Conference (see UMR Feb. 8.)

During their stay in Liberia, the UMCOR staff members learned that rebel factions have agreed to work out details of their cease-fire. Following that meeting, the groups agreed to hold a conference in March to form an interim government.

Mr. Rollins told the Reporter that if the groups don't keep the agreement, the 17-nation Economic Community of West African States will continue to have a key role in running Liberia. That group has assigned thousands of troops to monitor the country, with security in Monrovia now being "quite good and stable," he said.

On a related note, Mr. Rollins told the Reporter he talked with the Rev. Frank Horton, a missionary from West Virginia, during a trip to Sierra Leone.

Mr. Horton had been detained by rebel military forces of Col. Charles Taylor.

For nearly two months, the missionary was stranded in Bomi Hills, about 60 miles north of Monrovia, the capital, until he sent word to Liberian Bishop Arthur Kulah for help.

"Frank is fine, but he has lost a lot of weight," said Mr. Rollins. "He was staying at a pastor's house and was allowed to hold regular worship services. Bishop Kulah spoke with the detainers and asked them to let him travel back to Sierra Leone."

The UMCOR team met with Bishop Kulah in Monrovia and developed "a very practical approach for helping Liberians," said Mr. Rollins.

"UMCOR will provide seed shipments to get vegetable crops in the ground and will have farm animals and hand tools replaced, because Liberians will begin their growing season shortly," he said.

"UMCOR will also provide assistance to nutrition centers. Real malnutrition is evident in Liberia."

United Methodist bishops have asked the entire church for donations to their Emergency Appeal for Liberia, Advance No. 150300-7.

Pew-hymnal sales top 3.7 million

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—As of early November 1990, more than 3.7 million pew editions of the United Methodist Hymnal were in the racks of the denomination's churches.

"This number is even more significant," says William L. Gnegy, marketing manager for the Cokesbury retail unit of The United Methodist Publishing House, "when you consider that the average worship attendance on a given Sunday in our churches is around 3.3 million persons.

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MARCH 10, 1991

UM giving tops $118 million

United Methodist News Service

United Methodists in the United States and Puerto Rico gave almost $118 million during 1990 to underwrite 20 domestic and international programs of their church.

The total of $117,974,851 is 1.82 percent more than in 1989, according to a report released Jan. 31 by the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), chief financial agency of the church with headquarters in Evanston, Ill.

The comparable figure for 1989 was $115,865,345.

The report released Jan. 31 is for only the denomination's domestic and international programs. It does not include approximately $2.8 billion given during 1990 for operating expenses and pastors' salaries at the local church level, and local and regional church programs.

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ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY, The United Methodist Church General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns: Staff associate for Christian unity and interreligious relationships with special attention to the relationship of unity and social justice. Ecumenical experience, knowledge and United Methodist. Affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. Salary dependent upon experience and qualifications. Application deadline, March 29, 1990. Write: Search Committee, c/o Bruce W. Robbins, General Secretary, GCCUIC, The United Methodist Church, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1300, New York, NY 10115.

FULL-TIME D.C.E., St. John's UMC, Austin, TX 78756. (512) 452-5737, suburban church with established program.

DALLAS CHURCH OF 2900 MEMBERS seeking Director of Youth/Single Adult Ministries. Interested persons contact the Senior Minister, Dr. Don F. Renshaw. (214) 233-7671.

FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR required for 1800-member church with dynamic growth pattern. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Orange Park United Methodist Church, 2063 Park Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073.

DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH: First United Methodist Church, Dallas, is seeking degreed, bilingual professional to direct outreach ministries. Communication and organizational skills required. Send resume to: Karen Spencer, 1928 Ross Ave., Dallas, TX 75201 by February 25, 1991.

DIRECTOR OF LAY MINISTRIES. New position for growing church. Responsibilities in youth, evangelism, pastoral care. College degree preferred. Write: SPRC, Trinity UMC, 3402 Jackson, Amarillo, TX 79109. (806) 376-6182.

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Dialogue encouraged by scholars

'Both liberal and conservative camps need to talk to each other'

By RITA HEALY

DENVER—Both "liberals" and "conservatives" within the church need to overcome a potential narrowness of concept to find meaningful dialogue.

That was the consensus of two speakers at this year's United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology Week of Graduate Lectures in Denver.

The Rev. Delwin Brown, a liberal theologian at Iliff, and the Rev. Clark Pinnock, an evangelical-conservative scholar at McMaster Divinity College in Ontario, Canada, in a joint lecture affirmed the benefits of communication between these two strong factions of the church.

The pair have produced a new book, "Theological Crossfire," consisting of a dialogue of their differing views.

Dr. Brown—who was raised in the Church of God and now is United Methodist—led off by acknowledging that most North American Christians today consider themselves conservatives.

Entered mainstream

"They have entered the mainstream of American life as members of newly-formed nontraditional fellowships and, perhaps more important, as a significant bloc of our established denominations," he said.

For liberals, this trend may be surprising, he added, because often liberals consider the conservative Christian experience a negative experience that includes "moral insensitivity," "intellectual rigidity" and "the untenable idea that the Bible is a doctrinally consistent, inerrant rule in all matters of practice and belief."

Dr. Brown said conversations with evangelicals might be valuable in helping liberals focus their own beliefs. He also said that such dialogues would be helpful in learning about beliefs of conservatives.

And he said that conservatives might learn, too.

Dr. Pinnock emphasized that liberals and conservatives "need to talk to each other, not past each other." And he acknowledged that often it is evangelicals who need to be persuaded that dialogue is important.

He said dialogue is justified on the basis of practical wisdom and on the basis of a shared past.

The Bible "speaks" through many voices, he said. "A text with many different voices can best be heard by many different ears," he said.

Regardless of positions held, he said, dialogue brings issues to the surface and makes learning possible.

"We know in part—that's why we need each other," he added.

"Great theologians," he continued, "wrestled with the message and with human existence in their times."

Explore all questions

Dr. Pinnock said that discussion—whether issues are major or minor—leads to clarification or correction. He said both "camps" need to remember that the role of a theologian is to explore all questions, whereas pastors and bishops have other, different functions.

He said each camp needs to realize that the other is concerned about the basic central message. Conservatives, he said, tend to think that liberals are concerned only with modernity.

Ms. Healy is a freelance writer in Golden, Colo.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

Displays of yellow ribbons and American flags, like these on an apartment door, are proliferating all over the United States. But what do they symbolize? War, peace or hope? In a recent speech, U.S. Rep. Patricia Schroeder of Colorado warned peace activists not to "let the other side steal the symbols" (see story below).

History of Hymns

'Be still, my soul' is set to Jean Sibelius' tune

Be still, my soul, the Lord is on your side.
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; your best, your heavenly friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

The German hymn was by Katharina von Schlegel.

Born Oct. 22, 1697, she was attached to the ducal court at Cothen, a town near Halle, Germany, where she was on the staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Women's Seminary.

The hymn first appeared in a 1752 German songbook, the translated title being "A New Collection of Spiritual Songs." There were five stanzas with the scriptural reference: "In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19).

About 30 hymns came from her pen, but only this one has been translated into English.

The English translation was made by Jane Borthwick, the daughter of an insurance executive in Edinburgh, Scotland. The translation appeared in 1855.

The tune "Finlandia" is an arrangement of a melody from an orchestral tone poem of the same name, composed in 1899 by Jean Sibelius, considered the national composer of Finland.

Sibelius studied law at Helsingfors University, but his love for music was too strong. He spent three years at the conservatory and then studied with excellent teachers at Berlin and Vienna.

Recognizing his creative musical gifts, Finland awarded him a grant for life, which allowed him to devote his time to composition at his home at Jarvenpaa.

When Yale University awarded him a doctorate in music in 1914, the citation read: "What Wagner did for the ancient German legends, Sibelius has, in his own magnificent way, done for the Finnish myths in Finland's national epos."

The hymn tune version first appeared in Scotland's Presbyterian Church Hymnary (1927).

In America it was first used by Presbyterians in The Hymnal (1933), edited by Clarence Dickinson.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"

Dear Deborah

Why can't Deborah be more like Ann or Abby?

Dear Deborah:

What used to be my favorite column in the "Wesley Journal" under the old Deborah is now nothing to read. People had real problems and received real answers. You seem to be too timid to give much of an answer.

I think I'll be sick if we read much more about musical notes and other marshmallow material.

Can't you be more like Ann Landers or Dear Abby columnists? They speak their minds and try to help with issues more than note shapes.

Tom

Dear Tom:

I read Ann Landers every day, and Dear Abbey whenever I can find her in other papers. I admire and respect them for the work they do and their research on which to base their advice. But with two good ones, why do you think we need another?

My column is much more directly for churches and pastors, and the letters I get are mostly along those lines.

There were a lot of letters about the musical shape notes, so it seems that many readers were interested.

In my column I want to encourage people to use their own minds and make use of their own resources and support people in their family, church and community.

Giving them a decision I have made, which may or may not fit their circumstances, would allow them to avoid the hard work of making their own decisions.

I firmly believe that people have to live with the consequences of the choices and decisions they make or fail to make, and they have a right to do that for themselves.

Write "Dear Deborah," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE

Children bathe in gutters

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti—Women bathe their children and wash clothes in a gutter in Haiti's largest city. Life has returned to normal following elections in this country, one of the poorest of the western hemisphere. United Methodists support work in Haiti through 12 programs of the Advance for Christ and His Church through the General Board of Global Missions.

Churches encouraged to 'stay in' war debate

By RITA HEALY

> ***"I'm always very saddened when we move to war because that means diplomacy has broken down."***
> **—Patricia Schroeder**
> **U.S. congresswoman**

DENVER—The senior woman in the U.S. House of Representatives recently commended churches for being "out front" in the debate over the Persian Gulf war.

Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.), speaking at Iliff School of Theology's annual Week of Graduate Lectures, also rebutted the Bush administration's Persian Gulf policy.

Other than debate the issues, what can church people do?

Congresswoman Schroeder—elected nine times since 1972—answered:

✓ Help families whose relatives are involved.

✓ Initiate dialogues on what constitutes strength in this country. She said she thought "Rambo mania" ended with the 1980s. But in the Middle East, "we've gotten ourselves into a position where toughness is important."

✓ Support early education in conflict resolution.

✓ "Stay in the debate."

She applauded peace protestors, saying, "When I heard Secretary (of Defense Richard) Cheney say there'd be no ground war until the end of February, it made me think that the peace demonstrations are working."

But she warned peace activists not to "let the other side steal the symbols." (the flag, yellow ribbons, etc.)

She told the audience at the United Methodist-related seminary that continued sanctions probably would have worked against Iraq.

She said, "I'm always very saddened when we move to war because that means diplomacy has broken down."

To make economic sanctions work against Iraq, she said, only three things were needed:

- The cooperation of Turkey, through which oil pipelines pass.
- The presence of the U.S. Navy;
- The Saudis allowing the U.S. to be present.

"That's all. The only thing (Saddam Hussein) has to get out of there is oil. You can't smuggle it out. Ninety-six percent of Iraq's exports are oil. Four percent are dates.

"If they got the dates out, we weren't too worried.

"But that's not the issue. That's history. We're there."

Now, she said, the main goal must be to limit bloodshed.

One way to protect U.S. soldiers, she said, would be to require that the U.S. government's allies in the Persian Gulf neighborhood provide all ground troops. She supports that idea.

But the U.S. military doesn't like the idea, she said. They contend that by using ground troops exclusively from the neighborhood, the Pentagon might lose its control.

Consultant proves 'world parish' is a reality when German pastor visits injured American

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—The meaning of United Methodism's "The World Is Our Parish" credo has taken on new meaning for an employee of the denomination's central information service.

A few days before the Christmas holidays, InfoServ consultant Mary Lynn Holly received a call from a United Methodist church secretary in Georgia.

A couple from the church had been involved in a serious auto accident in Germany, leaving the husband hospitalized in critical condition in Berlin.

The injured man's wife wanted to find a United Methodist minister in Germany but was unable to do so. Could InfoServ help?

Ms. Holly consulted a directory of United Methodist congregations in Germany and suddenly recognized a name—Friedenskirche (Peace Church).

The church was to be the site of the German portion of a joint United Methodist Christmas Eve service on ABC-TV.

She had been aware of publicity about this special "Light for the World" service to be held in cooperation with Grace United Methodist Church in Decatur, Ill.

She remembered, too, that staff members of United Methodist Communications (UMCom), of which InfoServ is a unit, had been in touch with the Friedenskirche pastor, the Rev. Martin Lange.

After contacting UMCom's Shirley Struchen, who was serving as producer liaison between the two churches and ABC, Ms. Holly passed along Mr. Lange's telephone numbers to the caller.

After Christmas, Ms. Holly heard from the church secretary in Georgia again and learned that the phone numbers InfoServ had provided had made it possible for the young woman to contact Dr. Lange.

"He had visited her that very day, providing the comfort and reassurance she was seeking," Ms. Holly added.

"I cannot describe the pride and sense of accomplishment I felt upon learning the details of Dr. Lange's visit," she said.

> ***'It was one of those days I would have paid UMCom for letting me come to work.'***
> **—Mary Lynn Holly**
> **InfoServ consultant**

"It was one of those days I would have paid UMCom for letting me come to work."

United Methodist Bishops Woodie W. White, Springfield, Ill., and Ruediger R. Minor, Dresden, and Mr. Lange spoke during the ABC telecast.

Dr. Lange is one of three national German church leaders invited to moderate "the Roundtable," which developed first-step guidelines for the new unified German government.

The National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. arranged for the "Light for the World" broadcast.

Ms. Struchen is chairwoman of the council's liturgical committee.

The Living Room Monk at War

A living room monk am I become;
Listening to remote transmissions,
Deadening thumps and articulate anxiety,
On the electronic window.
Imagined war is now
Telecommunicated in two dimensions.
Behind the announcers are shadows dark as death.

Against this night my images of the desert explode:
Abba Anthony is crowded out by demonic babble;
Abba Poeman murmurs in the gritty wind:
"Ask always 'who am I' and judge no one."
Abram of Ur wonders
Who is Sarah's Isaac? Who is Hagar's Ishmael?
Jonah alone judges Nineveh.
Spiritual comets hurled out of time and place
By conflicting councils of angry gods
Set at crisscrossed purposes.
Tanks follow camel tracks; technicians replace magi.
The star blinks between rocket flares.

The obedient monk leaves the world plugged in.
These visions do not become hymns.
My thoat dries up watching.
In my cell I chant the ancient wisdom:
"The root of all war is fear."
I am rooted in this war
and fearful am I become.

—WILLIAM FITZGERALD

First UM TV station begins programming

United Methodist News Service

United Methodism's first broadcast television station began regular programming Feb. 1 in Macon, Ga.

WGNM, Channel 64, is on the air from 8:30 a.m. until midnight.

The station grows out of 15 years of cable telecasting by Good News Television, a project of the Macon District of the United Methodist Church.

The station began some broadcasting in November and since then has been installing additional equipment and revamping its program schedule.

"When we had the premiere, we wanted it to be smooth and professional-looking," said the Rev. Donald Wood, station director.

Mr. Wood estimates the cost of getting WGNM operational was about $1 million, about half of which was donated equipment, facilities and services.

The outstanding debt of $170,000 is being covered with sales of advertising and air time, he said.

THE METHODIST HOME OF NEW ORLEANS

Caring for Abused, Neglected and Abandoned Children

Methodist HOME NEW ORLEANS — Since 1886

815 Washington Avenue New Orleans, La. (504) 895-7709

Endowment Established

Dr. Richard Hodges and Dr. Kenneth Reed finalize Endowment Fund for The Methodist Home of New Orleans.

Dr. Richard E. Hodges, Executive Director of The Methodist Home and Dr. Kenneth Reed, Executive Director of The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana recently completed setting up an Endowment Fund for The Methodist Home of New Orleans. The fund is managed by The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana. This Fund establishes a legal entity by which gifts and grants can be dedicated to the support of The Methodist Home of New Orleans. A gift to our endowment enables your money to keep on working year after year.

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LIFE INSURANCE — Provides charitable gift tax deductions.

OUTRIGHT GIFT OF CASH, SECURITIES, OR PROPERTY — Provides immediate benefit to The Home, joy of seeing your assets work, and tax benefit.

LIFE ESTATE — Provides you continued use of your total estate while receiving a tax deduction.

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CHARITABLE LEAD TRUST — Provides current income to The Home with the principal reverting back to you in the future.

WHO TO SEE

As you arrange your finances to have a guaranteed income, pay less tax, or write a will, you now can find help through The Methodist Home Endowment Fund. Help is available by contacting either The Methodist Home (504/895-7709) or Dr. Kenneth Reed (504/346-1646).

USF&G Gives Grant

The Methodist Home was one of the Charitable Organizations receiving a grant from the USF&G National Golf Tournament. The USF&G is one of the major tournaments held each year by the professional Golf Association.

The $10,000 grant was present at a formal presentation. Dr. Richard Hodges, Executive Director and Rev. W. O. Lynch Jr., Community Relations Director, represented the Home. The check was presented by Mr. Tom Wolf, USF&G Golf Tournament Director and New Orleans Councilwoman Jacquelyn Clarkson.

Pictured l. to r. are Dr. Richard Hodges, The Methodist Home; Mr. Tom Wolf, USF&G; Mrs. Jacquelyn Clarkson, New Orleans Councilwoman; and Rev. W. O. Lynch Jr. during the presentation of the $10,000 grant from the USF&G.

Monthly Suggested Gifts

Recently, a church group asked us to make a Monthly list of needs with which they could help. We thought it was a good idea and that you might want to join them in this program. Below is the list we made.

FEBRUARY
Twin size bed spreads — red, blue, green, brown, yellow.

MARCH
Kitchen supplies. Table spoons, dish rags and towels, cereal Bowls.

APRIL
Toilet articles. shampoo, lotions, hair grease, etc.

MAY
Girls underwear. size 8-10-14
Ladies and boys underwear. size 8-10-12-14-16 and men's small.

JUNE
Swim wear. Boys, 8-10-12-14-16

JULY
Back to School supplies. Notebooks paper, back packs, composition books, pens, pencils, glue, blunt point scissors and markers.

AUGUST
Boys Knit shirts, 10-12-14-16-18-20 and smaller men's. Socks for both boys and girls.

SEPTEMBER
Jackets or sweater shirts for both boys and girls. size small (10-12), medium (12-16) and large (16-20)

OCTOBER
Fall and winter sleep-wear for girls and boys. size, 8 through 20 and small men's. Also small and medium ladies.

NOVEMBER
Sweaters, gloves. Sizes — small, medium, large.

DECEMBER
Things for Christmas toys, clothing, etc.

Healing Ministry Serving Children

The state services to the abused, abandoned and neglected children have changed over the past three years. The basic service in the past has been providing physical care in Relative's homes, Foster Homes, or Emergency Shelters. This was adequate for some of the children, but a large number had deeper problems which were not being met.

The state is now under legal action that contends these troubled children, in state care, are being passed from Foster Home to Foster Home with little help for their emotional problems. The state is now trying to serve these children in a better way.

Five years ago there were five Emergency Shelters, such as The Methodist Home in New Orleans. Today there are none. All infants through five years are placed in Home settings. Children who are so disturbed that they are not able to live in home settings, are now served in The Methodist Home Treatment Center.

These are not delinquents, rebellious youth, or those in legal trouble with the law. They are deeply troubled children who need Christian and professional help. Privacy laws do not permit us to use names or identifying pictures, but the following may give you some idea of the needs of our children.

#1 — Male, age 9, aggressive, hearing problem, mildly retarded, failed in 3 Foster homes, Mother surrendered her rights.

#2 — Female, age 10, twin, five siblings, physical neglect, sexually abused by mother's common law spouse, mother in prison and uses cocaine.

#3 — Male, age 11. Emotional abuse by grandmother. Withdrawn, unable to relate to others.

#4 — Female, age 12, Lack of supervision, sexually abused.

#5 — Female, age 13, Oldest child, left to raise brother and sister, authority problem, internal anger, can't bond, seven Foster Home Placements.

#6 — Female, age 12, verbal, sexual, and physical abuse and neglect, five siblings, three now in Methodist Home. Has had four failed foster home placements.

#7 — Male, age 9, Explosive temper, severe behavior problem, Adopted and now given up for second adoption.

#8 — Male, age 10, In state custody at 3 months, Returned to mother at 2 Years, Hospitalized for abuse two years later. Has been in Foster Homes since. Feels left out. Thinks people tend to "forget about me." Fights often, attacks teachers.

We want you to know that The Methodist Home of New Orleans is now more involved in bringing healing in the life of children and their families than ever before. Keep the children and us in your prayers.

Gifts Buy Vans

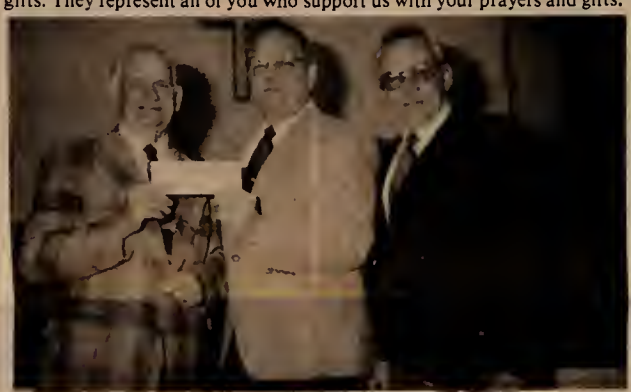
After years of struggling with old station wagons and constant breakdowns and repairs, the problem has been solved. Recently, two major gifts totaling $30,000 has enabled The Home to buy two new mini-vans. What a joy and relief it is to feel confident in driving the children to their events and appointments.

Over the past two years The Variety Club of New Orleans, has helped replace the large vans. The only old car left in our Inventory is our 1983 Chevrolet station wagon with 128,296 miles.

How grateful we are for all of your concern and help in helping us with our many needs. Keep us in your prayers.

Thanks for the Gifts

We are here only because you care. Your many gifts come to us by mail and by hand. Here are two who took time to come by and deliver their gifts. They represent all of you who support us with your prayers and gifts.



L. to r.: Al Jung, Shepherds Club of Arabi UMC; Rev. W. O. Lynch Jr., The Methodist Home; and Rev. Robert Bengtson, pastor of Arabi.

Paula Crawford of St. Charles UMW and Rev. W. O. Lynch Jr. of The Methodist Home.

Two for Two!

Two offerings for our two children's homes: Mother's Day, 1991 and Christmas Sunday, 1991

Why Support the Methodist Home?

Why should you care enough to support the Healing Ministry of children at The Methodist Home of New Orleans? Let me share some national statistics that happen everyday . . .

1,849 children are abused or neglected
3 children die from child abuse
3,288 children run away from home
150,000 children are homeless
658 children are arrested for drug and alcohol abuse
2,795 teenagers get pregnant
1,512 teenagers drop out of school
6 teenagers commit suicide

Children are our future. What a waste of precious resources. This affects all of us, even if they are not our own children. We will help them now or jail them later. We have a choice.

Your gifts to The Methodist Home of New Orleans provide the Healing Ministry that will enable us to return these children to a wholesome life and loving home.

Support Service

Mary Ann McClain, Coordinator of Support Services, stores eggs for her kitchen staff.

A great deal of our time and energy is given to Social Services and Medical healing. Sometimes we forget the important service that is quietly given day in and day out by our support services.

Coordinating our Support Services is Mary Ann McClain. Mary Ann oversees our Maintenance Dept., Kitchen and Cooks, Housekeepers, and Clothing and Laundry. It is her efficient operation that keeps our healing ministry going.

Mary Ann began working at The Home in 1980 as a Child Care Worker. Over the next five years she served at the Front Desk and then as Clothing Coordinator.

After spending some years in Baton Rouge she returned to New Orleans when her husband, Rev. Joe McClain, was appointed New Orleans District Superintendent. Because of her previous experience and her love for The Home, in 1989 she was asked to Coordinate the Support Services.

New Director Appointed at The Home

Keith Gerard Bauer, a Clinical Social Worker, has been appointed as Director of Therapeutic Services for The Methodist Home. While completing his Bachelor of Arts in Social Welfare at Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, he served as President of Phi Kappa Theta International Fraternity. He was President of the Student Government Association and listed in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.

He completed Teaching Certification at Our Lady of Holy Cross College, N.O., and earned a Master of Social Work from L.S.U. He has served as a Social Work Intern at East Jefferson General Hospital. He has served as Unit Supervisor and Child-Care Worker at Madonna Manor Home for Dependent Boys in Marrero, La.

Recently, Keith has been Social Services Department Head and Baseball Coach for Jefferson Parish School Board. He is married to Judy Loupe Bauer. His son Jarret Bauer is eight years old and his step-daughter, Crystal Adams, is 18 and attends L.S.U. Keith's hobbies are Collecting Civil War Artifacts and Baseball.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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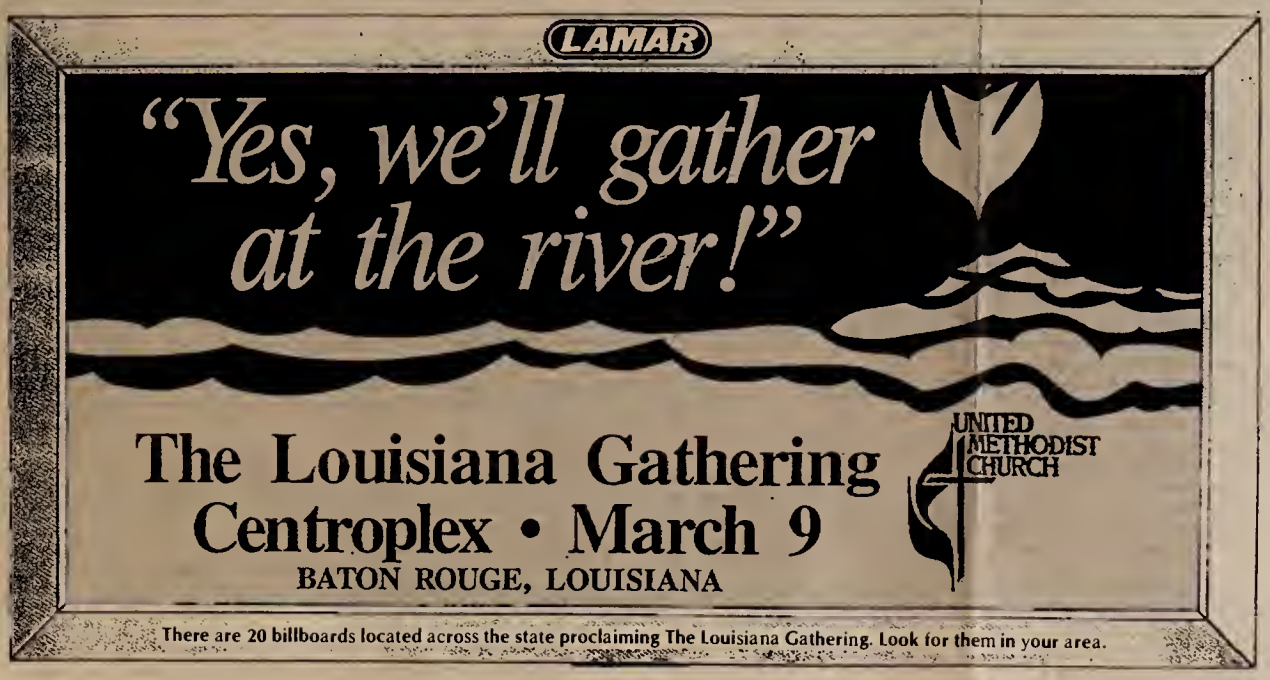


Yes, We'll Gather at the River! The Louisiana Gathering

Thousands of people recently gatbered in New Orleans for Mardi Gras.

Thousands of people gather in Baton Rouge for football and basketball throughout the year.

And on March 9

Thousands of United Methodists will gather at the River in the Centroplex in Baton Rouge:
to celebrate God's love, to witness to their faith, to remember who they are as people called United Methodists, and to renew their commitment to be Christ's disciples in the present age

They will:
- Sing the songs of faith with all 10,000 voices
- Listen to the 1,500 voice-combined Adult Choir, the 500-voice youth choir, the Centenary College and Dillard University Choirs, the Ensemble and the Dillard University Jazz Band
- Hear the Scripture read and the Word preached by Bishop Richard Wilke and Dr. Zan Holmes
- Participate in the Festival of the Banners representing local churches
- Share in the renewal of baptismal vows
- Share local churches' visions for the future
- Recall the calling to be in ministry
- Call on God through Christ to hear and renew the World

Come to The Gathering

Questions and Answers for Use in Preparing for the Louisiana Gathering

The Louisiana Gathering Leadership News Release

Where Is The Centroplex?

The Baton Rouge Centroplex is located at 275 South River Road, down by the Riverside. It is behind the Old State Capitol and across the street from the USS Kid and the Old Train Station. Out of town guests should travel on Interstate 10, or 110. Interstate 10 travelers should turn onto 110 to downtown Baton Rouge. Exit on Government Street or Convention Street and head toward the river. Both streets will end at River Road. Those traveling Convention Street will turn left on River Road and continue until you see the Centroplex on your left. Government Street will end at River Road and the Centroplex Arena and parking.

What About Parking?

Parking is available at the Centroplex, off-street parking, and in parking lots surrounding the Centroplex. The cost for parking in the Centroplex parking garages is $3 per car. The parking lot immediately adjoining the arena will be reserved for handicapped parking and those assisting in the service. There will be parking attendants to assist in locating parking areas. Buses are asked to unload passengers at the Centroplex and then will be directed to a designated parking area. Final plans for either church-wide or district-wide transportation coordination should be arranged now through the district coordinator of transportation.

What About Meals?

There will be no food or drinks at the Centroplex. The only meals provided will be for the youth at First Church in Baton Rouge. The best option is to pack a sack lunch and a drink for you and your group. Restaurants are convenient throughout the area along the interstate and around LSU, but not downtown Baton Rouge.

What If I Want To Spend The Night On March 8th?

We have secured special discount rates at the Ramada Inn, 1480 Nicholson Drive, 1-800-786-0957 ($40 per night plus 11% tax) and the LaQuinta, 2333 South Acadian, 1-800-531-5900 ($39 per night plus 11% tax). We hope, however, that everyone will return home on March 9th in order to participate in the March 10th service of renewal and recovenanting at his/her home church. Please indicate that you are coming to the United Methodist Gathering when making reservations with these two hotels.

What If I Have A Handicapping Condition?

Special arrangements have been made to accommodate those with handicapping conditions. There is a circular drive at the front (River Road) of the Centroplex. This will provide easy access to the main floor of the arena. Seating will be provided on the main floor. "Signing" will be provided for the hearing impaired. Handicapped parking will be provided in the parking lot closest to the arena.

When Should I Arrive?

The worship service will begin officially at 2:00 p.m. There will be many other events occurring prior to the opening of worship.

11:00 a.m. Youth meet with Bishop Oden, Bishop Wilke, and Dr. Holmes at First Church, Baton Rouge.

11:30 a.m. Adult choir members arrive at the Centroplex to prepare for rehearsal (please eat prior to arrival).

11:30 a.m. Musical groups begin entertainment outside of arena.

11:30 a.m. Banner carriers arrive at Centroplex to rehearse processional. Ushers will direct them to the meeting room.

12:30 p.m. All pastors and Covenant carriers arrive at Centroplex for instruction and rehearsal for processional. Ushers will direct them to meeting room.

1:00 p.m. Youth choir rehearses at the Centroplex.

1:30 p.m. Pre-Gathering concert by Centenary and Dillard choirs.

2:00 p.m. The Louisiana Gathering Worship begins.

No Nursery Is Provided

Can I Come Even If I Didn't Sign A Card Of Intention?

Please let everyone know that the invitation is still open and that everyone is encouraged to attend. No reservations are necessary.

What About Cameras, Tape Recorders, And Mementoes?

The Gathering will be professionally photographed and taped. Later, these pictures and tapes will be made available through the Conference office.

Additionally, buttons with the Louisiana Gathering Logo will be available at the Centroplex. A donation for each button will be asked to defray expenses.

Additionally, buttons with the Louisiana Gathering Logo will be available at the Centroplex. A donation for each button will be asked to defray expenses.

Great Preaching at The Louisiana Gathering

Bishop Richard B. Wilke

Dr. Zan Wesley Holmes Jr.

Two of United Methodism's great preachers are speaking at the Louisiana Gathering. The Reverend Dr. Richard B. Wilke, Bishop of the Arkansas Area and the Reverend Dr. Zan Wesley Holmes Jr., pastor of St. Luke's "Community" United Methodist Church in Dallas, will deliver sermons during the worship service on March 9.

Bishop Wilke is perhaps best known for his two books **And Are We Yet Alive** and **Signs and Wonders**. He also, with his wife Julia, coordinated and designed the **DISCIPLE** Bible Study which is currently training Christian leaders in over 25,000 congregations.

Bishop Wilke is a native of El Dorado, Kansas, and has received degrees from Southern Methodist University, Yale Divinity School and Dubuque Theological Seminary. He has traveled extensively and is widely known for his preaching and speaking ability throughout the nation.

Dr. Holmes, like Bishop Wilke, brings considerable gifts to the ministry. Besides the work of his pastorate, he is employed as an Associate Professor of Preaching at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. In the past, he served in the Texas State Legislature from 1968-1972 and has also been active in the Dallas, Texas, community in educational and missional projects.

Dr. Holmes was educated at Houston-Tillotson College and Southern Methodist University. He was the narrator, as well, of the **DISCIPLE** Bible Study Program video and has served as an advisory member on the **Songs of Zion Song Book**.

Dr. Holmes and Bishop Wilke both offer Louisiana United Methodists a wonderful opportunity to be inspired and renewed by the great gifts of these men. Please don't miss the opportunity to hear these remarkable ministers.

March 10 Worship Services Continue the Spirit of The Gathering

Momentum is building for The Louisiana Gathering in Baton Rouge on March 9! Not to be forgotten in the overall vision, however, are the special services planned in each local church on Sunday, March 10.

"It's our plan that the excitement and renewal of The Gathering should spill over into worship in every church in Louisiana," according to Ron and Kathy Dauphin, members of the worship planning group. "What a wonderful opportunity for our churches!"

Each pastor has received suggested resources for use on that Sunday, including suggestions for the baptismal renewal portion of the liturgy. "We want folks to know that The Service of Baptismal Renewal is not like getting baptized again . . . it's a way of using water as a symbol, a reminder of the vows of baptism. Certainly God has kept true to the vows, but our side could use some strengthening."

Church members will also renew their membership vows on that Sunday, and some churches may choose to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion as well.

The local church service, like The Gathering, will include a call to Christian Ministry, encouraging those who may be wrestling with a decision for full-time Christian service.

The service was designed to be used comfortably with each local church's traditional ways of worship. Pastors have been encouraged to adapt the suggested resources to fit the uniqueness of their churches. Banners from The Gathering should be prominently displayed on Sunday. Churches may also on that day wish to share their Covenant Statements prepared for the Vision 2000 program.

Ten-thousand United Methodists praying and worshiping under one roof promises to be a great event; perhaps greater still will be the day *one-hundred-fifty-thousand* United Methodists across Louisiana pray for God's renewing love on March 10. May God's spirit flow through us as channels of love and grace!

One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday, March 10, 1991

Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river; Gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Editorial

Collision of faith and culture calls us to emulate Jesus

How can the Christian Gospel be presented meaningfully to persons in different cultural settings without becoming tainted by alien values?

That question has dogged Christianity since its beginnings. It surfaced anew during the just-completed Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia (see UMR, Feb. 22).

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

It's hard to know if this act by Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung represents a brilliant spiritual insight or a compromise of the Christian faith. But all Christians must be prepared to struggle with the debate it has ignited over the uncritical blending of non-Christian religious practices with Christianity.

During her speech to a gathering of 3,500 Christians from across the globe, Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung, a Presbyterian woman theologian from Korea, read a list of martyrs—some Christians and some not. Then she burned the list and scattered the ashes skyward—a gesture that reminded some at the gathering of ancestor worship rituals in Asia.

Dr. Chung's action touched off a lively debate as some WCC participants objected that her act typified the dangers of "religious syncretism"—the uncritical blending of non-Christian religious practices with Christianity.

It is difficult for persons who did not witness this event to evaluate whether Dr. Chung's action constituted a brilliant spiritual insight or a compromise of the Christian faith. However, all Christians should be prepared to struggle with the serious "religious syncretism" issue that her action raises.

Paul warned the young church at Colossae against accepting pagan "philosophy and empty deceit" that are "not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8, NRSV).

Yet Paul was a master at using indigenous beliefs, such as the Athenians' "unknown god" at Mars Hill, to proclaim the Gospel of Christ (Acts 18:22-34).

That we are called to live our faith in the world creates a perpetual tension. We must guard on the one hand against the reshaping of Christianity into something it is not. On the other hand, we must constantly seek to relate the Gospel meaningfully to people in vastly different cultural settings.

Although there is no foolproof way for meeting this challenge, Jesus serves as our example.

Being one with God, Jesus could have presented Himself in earthly glory too brilliant for human eyes to withstand. Yet because He sought to call men and women back from their errant ways to God's ways, Jesus demonstrated God's will in a manner we can understand: as a human being who, like us, was part of a particular religious and social culture.

In His humanity, Jesus shows us how to relate to the world in a loving, caring manner as God's people without being ruled by worldly values.

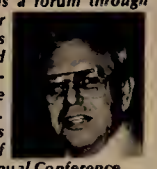
As we daily confront the collision of Christian faith and secular culture, we should emulate Jesus' example in drawing upon the message of Scripture, the wisdom of our religious tradition, and direct communion with God through prayer.

Perhaps the most reliable single evaluative question we can answer is: Does this cultural practice draw people more to itself or to Christ?

Here I Stand

We should change how we choose our bishops

By ROBERT D. SIMISON



"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Robert D. Simison is a retired member of the Kansas West Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

In a few short months Annual Conferences will be choosing delegates for General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The work of the Jurisdictional Conferences is primarily known for the selection and consecration of bishops, and the process has been criticized.

Historically, bishops were selected at General Conference. The process was moved to the Jurisdictional Conferences at the unions of 1939 and 1968.

Though selected regionally, each bishop is still considered a bishop of the whole denomination. The selection process was to be led by the Holy Spirit, not electioneering. In recent quadrennia "open campaigning" has been recognized as part of the process. A question has arisen: "Is the person with the best campaign the one best suited to be a bishop?"

One conference had two of its members selected as bishops in recent Jurisdictional Conferences. The campaign for each selection was disturbing in its intensity: a campaign coordinator, every annual conference delegation visited, commitments implied and support solicited. This might be a way to run a government; it might not be the way to run a denomination.

The political process, per se, is not all bad! A successful pastor must be an adept politician, balancing the ideals of the Gospel against the reality of human peculiarity and uniqueness. A successful episcopal leader must balance the objectives of the denomination against the uniqueness of the annual conference, and lead in fulfilling the call of God.

Our present system of selection of bishops does assure the election of one who can conduct an effective political campaign. The discontent over the episcopal leadership suggests the system is not as effective as we desire. Perhaps we ought to adopt something similar to the episcopal search committee of the Episcopal Church, operating on a jurisdictional level.

The search committee would tour the annual conferences, interviewing potential candidates and community leaders, seeking evidences of the gifts and graces perceived needed for a bishop. This search, summarized, with several nominees recommended, could be presented to the Jurisdictional Conference for consideration and selection.

There are several advantages:

1) High-powered political-style campaigns would be unnecessary;

2) Independent and objective review of the candidate's gifts and graces, and potential leadership would be available;

3) All the delegates would have the same information at the same time.

Now might be a good time for the Jurisdictional Colleges of Bishops to initiate this or some similar system. If a Jurisdictional Conference approves the recommendations, they may do as they desire. No harm would be done, and some good might come forth.

What others are saying

"The greatest danger we face in this 'Media War' is the danger of trivializing the war. We may come to believe that war isn't that bad. We may forget the pain and anxiety that our neighbors who have loved ones in the war face every day. . . . If we lose our sensitivity to the abhorrent violence that is war, we also lose our respect for life and all of God's creation. Our hope is never in war, but in the words of Psalms 63: 'Because your (God's) steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.' "

—The Rev. Ronald Wanless, communications director of the Western Pennsylvania conference.

Letters to the Editor

I'm saddened by homosexuality proposal

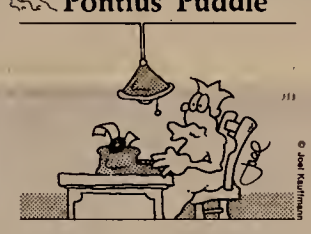
I was saddened, but not surprised by the article "Study panel eyes change in homosexuality stance" (see UMR, Feb. 15). It continues to amaze me how out of touch some of these people on these committees are with the grass roots of the church.

Why don't they do a survey and see how local churches feel about the possibility of changing our church's stand on homosexuality instead of asking all the so-called experts? Are they afraid that they would find that the majority of our people are orthodox and biblical and would reject the change?

I also have a recommendation for the committee. If we are to include all people in the church regardless of their sexual orientation, does that also include pedophiles, fornicators, and those people who prefer beastiality? Perhaps, we should commission a study committee for these people also.

Rick Anderson
Strasburg, Illinois

Pontius' Puddle



LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

I AM DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY YOUR MAGAZINE. THERE HASN'T BEEN A PUBLICATION WHOSE THEOLOGICAL TREATISES I'VE BEEN SO OFFENDED BY, WHOSE CANDID ACCOUNTS OF BICKERING AMONG CHURCH GROUPS I'VE BEEN SO EMBARRASSED BY, WHOSE NAGGING REMINDERS OF THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND CHURCH I'VE BEEN MADE TO FEEL SO GUILTY BY SINCE -- WELL, SINCE THE NEW TESTAMENT!

KEEP IT UP!!!

Why the confusion?

I cease to understand why there is so much confusion over the homosexuality question. Does not the Bible specifically and unequivocally condemn homosexual unions in Leviticus 18:22? This verse falls in the same chapter which prohibits incest and bestiality, intentionally linking homosexuality with these other forms of sexual perversion.

The attempt to alter the mandate of Scripture is a dangerous and blasphemous business, for it inherently transforms the "Rock of Ages" into a political putty out of which is readily sculpted a God in "man's" image.

The Bible is clear on this issue, and church doctrine should reflect this clarity without regard for the shifting sands of relativism and "political correctness."

John P. Feagins
Austin, Texas

I'm dismayed

I'm dismayed that The United Methodist Church would even consider having such a strong "doctrine of water baptism" (see UMR, Jan. 18) which all must believe in order to be a United Methodist.

In Scripture it states that there is one baptism. John the Baptist said, "I baptize with water, but there comes one after me who shall baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire." That is the important baptism.

I have been grateful that I could belong to a church which did not demand that I preach a certain doctrine on water baptism. I give the option, tell each person to study the Word, and be fully persuaded by his/her own heart. I urge that United Methodists be allowed to experience the freedom of the baptism of Jesus, and not be bound by the doctrines of man concerning water baptism. See Matthew 15:1-20.

Marjorie R. Drickey
Hanover, Illinois

What does it mean?

What does it mean to be a United Methodist? If the special study committee on baptism is successful in getting their proposal approved, it will simply mean "one who has been baptized in The United Methodist Church" (see UMR, Jan. 18).

And since infant baptism is strongly encouraged, most of these people will have had nothing to say about whether or not they wish to be baptized or whether or not they want to be a member of The United Methodist Church.

If church membership requires nothing from the individual—no profession of faith in Christ, not even belief in the existence of God, nor the desire to be a member of the church—what kind of a church will we be?

Doris Henderson
Albion, Oklahoma

I don't understand

Regarding "Struggling study panel OKs changes in baptism meaning" (see UMR, Jan. 18), I don't understand what the debate is about.

My Bible tells me to believe and be baptized. I do not believe in infant baptism for this reason.

My wife and I had our children dedicated to God at an early age. Then with our guidance and the teachings of the church we attended, they made their personal decision themselves. They had a baptism experience that they can remember with very fond and loving memories as the beginning of their Christian walk through life.

If this privilege is taken out of The United Methodist Church for my grandchildren, I suppose we will look for a new church home. The United Methodist Church is indeed getting too liberal, and seems on the verge of apologizing for God's influence in our lives.

R.O. Raffensperger
Manheim, Pennsylvania

We must disarm

I am a combat veteran of World War II. Our son is a disabled combat veteran of Vietnam. At the time, I believed that our country was justified in waging World War II. Sometime after the Korean War and before the Vietnam War, however, I came to the following conclusions about: War is mass murder! All wars are cruel and evil! It is only a matter of degree which is the most cruel and evil. There is no such thing as a "just war" (see UMR, Jan. 25 and Feb. 22).

In most wars of this century, many more civilians have been killed than military personnel. Why are civilians often treated as inanimate objects, to be destroyed at will, instead of as human beings, equal in value to any military personnel?

The quickest, cheapest, and safest way to end war is by multilateral, universal, disarmament.

Wilburn King
Vista, California

Welcome to readers in Saginaw

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 225 member-families of **Saginaw United Methodist Church in Saginaw, Texas** (Central Texas Annual Conference).

This is the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Saginaw, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure; their very minds and consciences are corrupted."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Matthew 5:16)

Readings for week of March 4

Monday: Psalms 19:7-12
Tuesday: Psalms 19:13-14
Wednesday: Exodus 20:1-17
Thursday: Exodus 20:18-20
Friday: John 2:13-22
Saturday: I Corinthians 1:22-24
Sunday: I Corinthians 1:25

Africa University

Vice President For Academic Affairs
Registrar
Assistant Registrar
Librarian

The Africa University, established by The United Methodist Church at Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, plans to open in March, 1992. The purpose of the University is to educate the new leadership of Africa nations in Christian values and context. The University invites nominations and applications for the positions of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar, the Assistant Registrar, and the Librarian. Africa training or experience is desirable.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Duties
The Vice President for Academic Affairs is the chief academic officer and reports to the President. The Vice President advises the President on all academic matters and provides leadership for the establishment of academic goals, the adoption of academic policy and curriculum. The Vice President coordinates the development of the academic budget; the recruitment, retention and promotion of faculty; and the evaluation of teaching, scholarship, and service.

Qualifications
The candidate should possess an earned doctoral degree, full-time teaching experience in higher education, and a record of published scholarship. Preferably, the candidate would be eligible for a faculty appointment in an academic department. The candidate must have successful administrative experience, detail oriented, and is willing to coordinate a range of disparate administrative assignments. Strong interpersonal, communication, and problem solving skills are essential.

The Registrar

Duties
The Registrar will arrange for the recruitment of staff, maintain all university records, work with the admission of students, arrange for the conduct of examination, act as secretary to university committees as designated by the President and assist the President in the administration of the University.

Qualifications
The candidate should possess a postgraduate degree or equivalent plus a deep and demonstrable understanding, knowledge, and experience of university administration. The candidate must be self-motivated, dedicated, and responsible, with a demonstrable ability to communicate readily and effectively at all levels with a wide variety of people, both within the University and outside.

The Assistant Registrar

Duties
The Assistant Registrar will report to the Registrar and is a generalist assisting with many detailed aspects of the Office of the Registrar.

Qualification
The candidate should possess a college/university degree in social science and a diploma in personnel management with four or more years of related work experience.

The Librarian

Duties
The Librarian will provide leadership in developing a new university library for graduate and undergraduate students, develop systems for delivering library resources and services to support on and off-campus teaching, plan the budget, purchase and organize learning resources, supervise library staff, and integrate technology to support and extend services.

Qualification
The candidate should possess a master's degree in library science and a minimum of four years of successful experience in academic library administration.

Application
Application, including a curriculum vitae, and names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references should be sent to: **Dr. John W. Z. Kurewa, The President-Elect, Africa University, P.O. Box 1320, Mutare, Zimbabwe.** Applications from outside of Zimbabwe should send a copy to: **Dr. Roger W. Ireson, General Secretary, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, The United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202-0871, USA.**

Application should be received by no later than March 31, 1991

The United Methodist REPORTER

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Faith watch

BIBLE IN 1,946 LANGUAGES: At least one book of the Bible now is printed in 1,946 languages and dialects, says United Bible Societies. That is an increase of 18 from 1989. Scriptures are available in languages understood by more than 80 percent of the world's population, the Bible group said. However, not all those people can get tbe Scriptures because of geographic isolation, illiteracy, political or social climate and difficulty of grasping meaning in other than one's first language.

SCHISM CALLED DISTANT: A projected schism in the deeply divided Southern Baptist ranks probably won't come as soon as first forecast, according to Bill Leonard, professor of American Christianity at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Stan Hastey, chief executive of the Southern Baptist Alliance. They told an alliance gathering recently that an actual open break between moderate and conservative churches may not come now at all, and certainly not in the near future, primarily because of the strong identification of members as Soutbern Baptists and because of extensive assets held witbin the convention.

'DEADLINE FOR PEACE': Evangelicals for Social Action, representing 2,500 Christians in the United States, has issued a "Deadline for Peace" call for a ceasefire in the Persian Gulf by March 24. Van Temple, associate director, said the date was chosen because it begins the Christian Holy Week, comes in the middle of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and ends with the first day of tbe Jewish Passover. Mr. Temple said if the deadline is ignored, a "waging of peace" is called for noon March 30, with demonstrations, rallies and prayer vigils nationwide.

SUGGESTIONS OFFERED: A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) panel has issued a 25-page report recommending give-and-take to close a long-standing breach between the denominational bureaucracy and the Presbyterian Lay Committee, an unofficial cburch renewal group. Over the past year, the panel held hearings and studied the church's relationsbip with the committee, which has rankled cburch bureaucrats with criticism of the cburch's theological and social pronouncements. The report goes to the 1991 General Assembly, the denomination's highest policy-making body.

Compiled from news and staff reports

WCC delegates' appeal: 'Stop the war!'

'Agonizing' debate produces document that narrowly avoids genuine pacifist stance

WCC Assembly Stories by STEPHEN L. SWECKER Associate Editor

CANBERRA, Australia—The Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, following an agonizing four and one-half hour debate, adopted an extensive statement calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Persian Gulf war.

"Stop the war! Pursue the way of peace!" the document stated in an appeal to churches, the United Nations, government leaders, and to peoples of other faiths.

During the debate the body narrowly averted adopting a statement that, according to many observers, would have put the WCC on record as being a pacifist organization.

Following the debate on the last day of the assembly, and after two public hearings during the Feb. 7-20 meeting, the 826 voting delegates from the WCC's 317-member churches voted overwhelmingly to adopt the ceasefire plea.

United Methodist delegates voted overwhelmingly with the majority.

No strings attached

The statement did not attach any conditions to its appeal for an immediate ceasefire but it contained 15 separate addresses to various groups.

Included in those addresses, the statement:

■ Urged churches "to be constant in prayer and pastoral care for the leaders of the nations . . . innocent civilians, those involved in the fighting, families and friends who grieve the separation or loss of their loved ones" and for conscientious objectors;

■ Called on the United Nations to "reassert your role as peacemaker, peacekeeper, conciliator and negotiator" and to return to using "non-violent sanctions" to bring Iraq into compliance with its violation of international law;

■ Called for a Middle East peace conference to address the need for a "just and lasting settlement" in the region aimed at "mututal recognition of all states" and "guarantees for their security";

■ Commended nations that are seeking a negotiated settlement of the conflict;

■ Called upon both Iraq and coalition forces to cease fire and work for a negotiated settlement within the context of the United Nations.

Anti-U.S. not intended

Dr. Janice Love, a United Methodist and moderator of the committee that presented the statement to the assembly, said that "it is not intended to be anti-U.S. statement."

However, Dr. Love said, "we recognize that, by calling for an immediate ceasefire and a non-military solution to the problem, it conflicts with the policy of the United States and other governments."

Dr. Love, who teaches international relations at the University of South Carolina, pointed out that the statement keeps faith with a long-standing tradition of the WCC's consulting with leaders of WCC-member churches and of taking positions that reflect their views.

U.S. church leaders previously issued a "Call to Churches" similarly calling for an immediate ceasefire.

Efforts were made unsuccessfully throughout the sometimes prickly debate of the statement to strengthen the document's acknowledgment that Iraq was the initiator of the Persian Gulf war by its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait and to express additional support for Israel, including a commendation of its restraint from retaliating to missile attacks by Iraq.

No special treatment

The latter appeals were effectively stemmed by a passionate statement by a Palestinian woman who argued against "special treatment" for Israel and stated that the United States was doing Israel's "retaliation" for it.

At one point during the debate, the assembly adopted an amendment that called upon churches to reject any "theological or moral justification for the use of military power."

The pacifist implication of the amendment threatened to sink the entire statement until United Methodist Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area), who previously voted for the amendment, moved its reconsideration.

The body then repealed its previous action, paving the way for a final vote on the document.

Despite the overwhelming vote adopting the statment, numerous reservations were voiced expressing doubt that the document was a responsible response to the Persian Gulf conflict.

"Some of us have been increasingly concerned that the WCC is trying to occupy a moral ground so removed from the real world that it won't be listened to by the real world," a delegate from the Church of Scotland stated.

A Swiss delegate stated immediately prior to the final vote that the drawn-out and at times emotional debate of the document showed that the body "really doesn't agree" and that it "might be more honest if we say we haven't found a way out."

Despite such appeals, delegates finally voted by a 3-1 margin to approve the document as an action of the assembly.

Other actions concern racism, money problems, new members

CANBERRA, Australia—Delegates to the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches last week called upon Christians to declare 1992—the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Western Hemisphere—"a year against racism" commemorating the "genocide" of indigenous people.

"We call upon the international religious community and governments to resist participating in activities celebrating 1992 designed without input of indigenous people," the statement declared.

The 1,000-word document called upon member churches of the WCC to "move beyond words to action" for the rights of indigenous peoples such as Native Americans.

Specifically, it urged churches to "negotiate" with indigenous people to restore land to them that had been unjustly taken by churches. It also called for protection of burial grounds and the freedom to practice traditional religions.

In other actions during the WCC's Feb. 7-20 meeting, some 825 delegates from 100 nations meeting under the theme, "Come Holy Spirit, Renew The Whole Creation":

■ Added seven churches to the council's membership, making the total membership 317;

■ Learned that the Geneva-based WCC has "serious" financial problems resulting from inflation, unfavorable currency exchange rates and expanded staff, which is projected to be reduced from 340 to 270 by the end of 1992;

■ Received major documents on creation theology, liberation, reconciliation and spirituality (all related to the Holy Spirit theme) and commended them to the churches for study;

■ Approved a statement urging all churches to take steps toward "full visible unity" including recognition of each other's baptism;

■ Heard that no fundamental change is anticipated soon in relationships between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. The latter does not belong to the WCC but participates fully in the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order;

■ Elected a new and expanded 150-member Central Committee to oversee WCC policies and programs between assemblies (the next one is scheduled for 1998). United Methodists elected to the Central Committee were Kathryn Bannister, Ari Carvalho, Janice Love and Bishop Melvin G. Talbert;

■ Elected eight new presidents to provide regional representation as leadership for the WCC between assemblies;

■ Listened to strong expression of concern by women, youth, and people with handicapping conditions (or "differently abled people") about the need for full participation in the life of the WCC and its member churches.

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Evangelicals say they find welcome at WCC

CANBERRA, Australia—Evangelical participants at the World Council of Churches reported overall positive attitudes toward their experience at the Feb. 7-20 meeting.

Patricia Brown

"I felt accepted by both the assembly and by the United Methodist delegation," said the Rev. Patricia Brown.

Ms. Brown heads the mission evangelism department of the United Methodist Church's General Board of Global Ministries.

Her experience echoed that of others at the assembly who described themselves as evangelicals.

Ms. Brown said that being "evangelical" meant affirming Scripture as the starting point for Christian decision-making and being "Christ-centered" in one's approach to personal and social issues.

Evangelical participants at the assembly sent a report to the body's program policy committee asking for an "evangelical presence" on every WCC commission.

They also prepared a letter to other evangelicals stating that "we felt welcomed in the dialogue and were able to contribute to shaping policy in concrete ways."

An example was an approved amendment to an assembly document calling for Bible study as being central to all WCC programs and as a central part of the next WCC assembly scheduled for 1998.

The letter also pointed out that "evangelicals remained underrepresented at Canberra" but took partial responsibility for that fact by the tendency of many evangelical churches to take little active involvement in WCC activities.

"We have been challenged again by the call for Christian unity which the WCC has had as its vocation. We call those with evangelical concerns to place high priority on Christian unity in their own agendas," the letter stated.

Ms. Brown expressed her own surprise, along with that of other evangelicals, at the affinity discovered between the concerns of evangelicals and Orthodox and Roman Catholic participants at the assembly.

The Rev. Bruce Robbins, chief executive of the United Methodist Church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, pointed out that the WCC has shown an increasing receptivity to churches that come from evangelical perspectives.

He cited as evidence the number of new member-churches whose theological stance reflects an evangelical emphasis.

New beginnings mark Assembly's closing days

CANBERRA, Australia—New beginnings mark the closing days of the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly. Top left, the Rev. Emilio Castro (right), WCC chief executive, embraces Bishop K.H. Ting of China after the acceptance of the China Christian Council into membership. Above, Kathryn Bannister of Dallas talks with United Methodist Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area) after their election to the WCC's Central Committee. Mrs. Bannister, 21, is one of the youngest members of the Central Committee. At left, the Rev. Jacob Kurian (right), Orthodox Syrian Church delegate from India, prepares to receive communion.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY STEPHEN L. SWECKER

Analysis shows UMs lagging in WCC financial support

CANBERRA, Australia—Do United Methodists give a "fair share" to the finances of the World Council of Churches?

Bruce Robbins

The answer to that question takes on particular significance in light of the WCC's fiscal problems disclosed at the Seventh Assembly.

According to an analysis of member-church giving prepared hy the WCC's financial office and not given wide distribution, United Methodists averaged $318,560 per year for the years 1983-89 in "undesignated" funds to the WCC.

Based on a "giving index" that permits comparison with other WCC member churches regardless of size or access to funds, United Methodists lag far behind Methodists in other countries and other WCC-member denominations in the U.S., the analysis indicates.

"From this international view, the United Methodist Church giving to the World Council would need to be increased by a multiple of 6.3 to achieve the same rate of giving as an 'average' member church," according to the WCC analysis.

This would mean an "undesignated contribution" from the United Methodist Church of some $2 million per year, the analysis stated.

However, according to other WCC financial reports, United Methodist giving totaled $2-4 million during 1989. The difference? The total includes both "undesignated" funds and an additional $2.1 million in "designated" funds donated by various United Methodist general boards and agencies.

"Designated" contributions are restricted to specific programs and activities of the WCC.

How important is the distinction between "designated" and "undesignated" funds?

"Very important, " according to the Rev. Bruce Robbins, the United Methodist Church's top ecumenical staff officer.

"Undesignated funds are the backbone of the WCC," Dr. Robbins explained. "They enable it to carry on its day-to-day operations."

A dropoff of "undesignated" income due to inflation and unfavorable currency exchange rates was said to be a major part of the WCC's financial problems.

Dr. Robbins said that undesignated giving by the United Methodist Church during 1983-89 fell short of the WCC's "asking," but his agency has committed to paying the full United Methodist "fair share" in full beginning in 1993.

Financial support is not a condition for membership in the World Council of Churches.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

INTERIM EXECUTIVE: Betty Sanders Gordon, a former director and consultant with the General Board of Global Ministries, has been named interim head of the board's Mission Personnel Resources Program Department. She will divide time between the board's New York office and the church's Mission Resource Center in Atlanta. Active in the West Virginia Annual Conference, Ms. Gordon chaired the global ministries board's Mission Resource Center Task Force and site-selection team. She also chaired the committee that developed the board's theology of mission statement and was 1984-88 vice-president of the Women's Division.

PEACE OFFERING: Three United Methodist ordained ministers in Wisconsin have sparked a "peace offering" that will be saved for use after the Persian Gulf war. The offering was received at an ecumenical prayer service for peace at Waupaca (Wisc.) United Methodist Church. The pastor, the Rev. Perry Bell, said he and two other clergy, the Revs. Dan Schwerin and Joan Frost, based their idea on Jeremiah 32:9-15. The passage tells how the prophet purchased the Field at Anathoth as a sign of hope in the future.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED: A call to clarify the United Methodist Church's position on abortion heads a list of 10 issues the evangelical Good News caucus will take to the denomination's top legislative body meeting in Louisville, Ky., in 1992. The caucus's executive secretary, the Rev. James V. Heidinger, said evangelicals in the church disagree with those who interpret the current statement as "pro-choice." "We need to come out strongly as being pro-life," he said.

STORIES INVITED: A consultant to the United Methodist Committee on Relief is seeking local-church success stories related to participation in either United Methodism's Advance for Christ and His Church (second-mile giving) or in the interdenominational One Great Hour of Sharing. Photos, brochures, articles are welcome. Send to Dr. Robert C. Smith, 1142 Alger SE, Grand Rapids MI 49507.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE: "How-tos" of communications skills will be covered in workshops in both English and Spanish at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville—July 8-13 (English) and July 11-13 (Spanish). Subjects include video production, radio, internal communications and strategy for local church media campaigns. Co-sponsors are the host center and United Methodist Communications.

What happens with ineffective clergy?

Two national UMC consultations seek to increase ministers' effectiveness

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

How does the United Methodist Church remove ineffective clergy from its ranks of more than 38,000 ordained persons and assist them in finding effective ministry in other fields?

Those were the central questions posed at two national consultations held early this year under sponsorship of the denomination's Division of Ordained Ministry.

Thirty-two persons from 16 annual conferences, representing all five regional jurisdictions of the church in the U.S., met recently in Atlanta and in Denver.

Summarizing the findings of the consultations for United Methodist News Service, division staff member J. Richard Yeager said general agreement is that greater attention must be given to evaluating and supervising all pastors before doing much with marginal ones.

"No short and easy process exists for evaluating pastoral effectiveness," Mr. Yeager said.

Some conferences are turning to a short "advice-giving" procedure, which Mr. Yeager says "sours the collegial and consultant relationship."

This procedure calls for the pastor-parish committee to tell the pastor what his or her strengths or weaknesses are or what components of his or her ministry should receive more or less time.

'Conferencing' model

One model of evaluation presented by the ministry division at each consultation was based on "conferencing," a concept Mr. Yeager said was used frequently by Methodism's founder John Wesley. In conferencing, individuals meet to share perceptions of their call to ministry.

Mr. Yeager explained how the concept would work in the 1990s:

"The beginning point in developing and evaluating ministry is to 'conference' relative to what we are called to be and do—the pastor with the administrative board; the pastor-parish relations committee with the pastor; the pastor with the district superintendent; the district superintendent with the charge conference, the clergy in a district and the sessions at annual conference."

The primary task of evaluation, Mr. Yeager stressed, is to help pastors identify their primary strengths and secondary weaknesses so they can take full advantage of strengths and delegate around weaknesses.

"We must avoid leaving the impression that pastors are expected to be omnicompetent," he said.

'Working on effectiveness'

"We are in the business of taking full advantage of the pastor's strengths rather than probing to find weaknesses; thus, we are working on effectiveness rather than ineffectiveness."

While consultation participants were not asked to act on "conferencing," Mr. Yeager said they responded positively and called for testing it as an effective way of promoting mutual support and meaningful accountability.

Small-membership church survival is goal of churchwide study group

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

PHILADELPHIA—Survival of hundreds of United Methodist churches, along with more effective ministry and heightened self-esteem for two thirds of all congregations, is the focus of an extensive set of proposals worked out by a denominationwide task force.

The changes, if accepted by the church's top policy-making body, would substantially affect the organization and pastoral leadership of congregations with 200 or fewer members.

About 65 percent of the 37,500 United Methodist congregations in the United States and Puerto Rico fall into this category.

In denominational parlance, these congregations are known as "small-membership churches." Almost a third of the 8.9 million United Methodists in the U.S. worship in these churches in urban, rural, suburban and small-town settings.

The Rev. Warren J. Hartman, a researcher for the church's General Board of Discipleship, has said that most small-membership congregations will be forced to operate from a "survival or maintenance mode."

Such churches have been closed regularly in recent years; many face severe financial difficulties.

Confronted with this generally troublesome outlook, the church's 1988 legislative General Conference ordered a four-year study to develop strategies for strengthened ministry and witness.

Recommendations for revisions in church law were completed by a panel headed by Myrtle Felkner, a Board of Discipleship staff member based in Centerville, Iowa.

A majority of the proposals deal with clergy leadership; others, with structural changes.

The recommendations include calling for full voting and sacramental rights for all clergy, more extensive "on-the-job" training in small-membership settings and longer tenure for pastors.

Also asked are steps toward reducing the traditional gap in pastoral salaries between large and small-membership churches.

One of every five charges in the denomination is served by a local pastor, most in small-membership churches, according to a recent survey. The percentage climbs to almost half the charges in Kentucky and North Alabama conferences.

Structural changes would make it possible for a congregation to function administratively with as few as nine persons, and provide greater flexibility in organizing cooperative parishes of several congregations.

Churches would be expected to seek new understanding of the relationship to their community; a small-membership church committee in each annual conference would be mandated; and a denominationwide interagency committee dealing with these congregations would be established.

The proposals worked out at this meeting go to the Board of Discipleship; and, if accepted there, to the 1992 General Conference.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Small churches make up about 65 percent of the 37,500 United Methodist congregations in the United States and Puerto Rico. A denominationwide task force is proposing ways to help small churches survive.

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VACATION BARGAIN— LOVELY vacation cottage in Smokey Mountains at Lake Junaluska, NC. Three bedrooms with scenic deck. Location 30 minutes away: Asheville, Cherokee Indians, Gatlinburg, Maggie Valley and other unforgetable places. $210.00 weekly, $80.00 Week-end. Call Oon at (404) 552-8888.

VETERAN NATIONAL MEMORIAL Shrine. This veteran shrine chartered in 1973 for all Veterans from all conflicts is unveiling operation "After the Storm" for the purpose of raising funds so growth can continue. The shrine wants no donations, just the opportunity to send you a sweat shirt for $20.00 or a t-shirt for $14.00. The shrine's insignia on the shirt supports the troops of Oesert Shield-Oesert Storm. Please send your orders to: Robert Lynch, President, Veteran National Memorial Shrine, Box 10421, Fort Wayne, IN 46852. Indicate size. Add $1.50 shipping per shirt.

SUE BENNETT COLLEGE SEEKS applications and nominations for the position of President. This 2-year liberal arts college in Southeastern Kentucky is related to the General Board of Global Ministries. Contact: Ed LeMaster, 168 Lincoln Or., London, KY 40741. Telephone: (606) 864-9379. Applications due by April 15.

'Unemployed saints' description given to United Methodists who avoid 'holy lives'

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Living a "holy" life is not impossible, United Methodist annual conference lay leaders were told recently by the Rev. Mary Lou Santillan-Baert, managing editor of "El Aposento Alto," the Spanish-language edition of "The Upper Room."

Using the 1991 Laity Sunday Theme—"We are called to holy living"—Ms. Baert gave four addresses during the annual meeting of the National Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders.

Ms. Santillan-Baert

"Jesus lived a holy life," Ms. Baert observed. "Why can't we? He was the Son of God, but he was also fully human. Is not his God our God? Is not his God available to us today to empower us to live as saints?"

Because many United Methodists have lost the early Wesleyan emphasis on "holiness," Ms. Baert said, they have become "unemployed saints."

'Jesus enjoyed life'

For those who think holy living is not enjoyable and that it restricts persons from having fun, Ms. Baert said Jesus enjoyed life, yet he was holy.

"Jesus Christ came to show us it can be done. Jesus came as an example to show us we can be saints without any magic formulas and secret recipes," she said.

"Busy-ness," even in the church, can prevent holy living, she said.

"We are often so busy doing the Lord's work we do not have time to know the Lord. . . . There is more to life than increasing its speed."

'Take time to listen'

Listening is a key ingredient in holy living, Ms. Baert said.

"How many times have we asked what God will have us do and have not taken time to listen for a response?"

A major portion of the lay leaders' annual meeting was spent sharing programs and projects in the various regions of the church.

They ranged from events honoring individual laypersons for exemplary Christian ministry to prison visitation programs and social involvement such as pushing for warning labels on alcoholic beverages.

Reflecting their concern about the Persian Gulf War, the lay leaders voted to follow the lead of the church's bishops, who are fasting each Friday until 3 p.m. and praying daily for the crisis.

Judges were announced to select the person to deliver a laity address at the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

The official address is intended to capture "the spirit and visions of United Methodist laity."

The theme is "Ministry of the Laity: Serving God in Our Private Lives and Public Responsibilities—Connecting Faith and Action."

Finalists will be chosen

Three to five finalists, who will be chosen in a process involving 10 screeners, will give their addresses during next year's annual meeting of lay leaders. The three judges will make their decision there.

Heading the Laity Address Oversight Committee is Kenneth Plummer of the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference.

Is 'self-deliverance' better than slow death?

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—If you're facing a slow, painful death—particularly from AIDS—you should have the option of taking your own life, a United Methodist Interagency Task Force on AIDS was told recently.

However, the task force heard others decry such an option as suicide or as an act that might be taken prematurely.

The Rev. Julian Rush, associate pastor of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Denver and director for seven years of the Colorado AIDS Project, said an increasing number of persons with AIDS are choosing "self-deliverance" so they can die with dignity.

Mr. Rush was invited by the 23-member task force to share some ethical issues facing ministers and AIDS patients.

Denominationwide group

The task force, created by the church's 1988 legislative General Conference, includes representatives from denominationwide boards and agencies, a man whose son has AIDS, a young adult who has AIDS, a woman who is HIV-positive, and a caregiver for one who recently died of complications related to AIDS.

Mr. Rush said he never tells a person what to do but provides resources needed for that person to make an informed decision about how he or she will die.

"I do what I do on my knees with trepidation," he said. "It is awesome and frightening."

Mr. Rush said he had worked directly with seven people and indirectly with another six who chose to "self-deliver."

Deaths contrasted

In one case, he said, an AIDS patient stashed away sufficient lethal drugs, which he secretly took to the hospital once he was convinced that the alternative was unrelieved suffering. The patient "slipped into a coma" and died five hours later, apparently with the doctor's knowledge that he had given himself the drugs, Mr. Rush said.

Mr. Rush contrasted this peaceful "passage" to other traumatic AIDS-related deaths.

"I saw one young man smothering to death, with his back arched, eyes bulging, gasping for breath. . . . That is a hell of a way for anyone to have to die."

One task force member with the potentially deadly HIV virus expressed reservations about the self-deliverance concept.

"I ask myself, 'What would Jesus do if he had AIDS and was on death's bed?' " said Helen Worth of Portville, N.Y.

Richard Glodo of St. Louis was the companion of Terry L. Boyd, another task force member who died April 27, 1990, of AIDS. Mr. Glodo expressed concern that a decision to "self-deliver" might be made prematurely.

"If Terry had made that decision early, reconciliation might not have taken place between him and his father," Mr. Glodo said.

Mr. Rush acknowledged that, in some instances, he believes people made the decision prematurely but added, "We learn that we have to let go. The ultimate decision about quality of life must be made by each individual."

The church, he added, must help the medical community with the issue. Hospital ethics committees are not discussing self-deliverance, he said, because the medical profession is dedicated to "saving life."

At their next meeting, Sept. 6-7 in Nashville, task force members will work on a report to the 1992 General Conference. It is expected that the task force will ask for its continuation! As one member said, "This issue isn't going away soon."

Impact of 200 years of missions explored on interfaith network

Religious News Service

The impact of the last 200 years of Christian missionary efforts will be explored in "Missionaries," a five-part BBC documentary which debuted Feb. 23 on VISN, an interfaith cable network.

Filmed on five continents, the series looks at both the good news and bad news of Christianity's encounter with different cultures and religions. It will run for five consecutive Tuesdays at 10:00 p.m. EST.

"We feel it is particularly significant to present this distinguished series at this critical time in history when there is a heightened need to understand the impact of what happens when two divergent cultures meet," said Jeffrey Weber, VISN vice president in charge of programming.

One aim of the telecast is to promote a better understanding of the "often controversial work of missionaries," he said.

VISN's 24-hour programming reaches about 7.5 million viewers over 470 cable systems, with another 1.5 viewers picking it up with private satellite dishes.

The debut episode titled "To the Ends of the Earth" traced the development of Christianity from its beginnings to its present state as the world's major religion, with more than 250,000 missionaries worldwide.

VISN will add commentary from mission experts at the end of each episode.

Later segments look at the missionary movement around the world: "The Last Frontier" in New Guinea, "Fertile Ground" in Africa, "Taking Sides" in South America, "Stony Ground" in Asia and "The Dark Continent" in Europe.

Dr. Lamin Sanneh, a professor of missions and world Christianity at Yale Divinity School, is one in-studio expert.

The Ghana native said missionaries often got as good as they gave: "Missionaries entered foreign cultures, unpacked their bags and something happened to them. In many situations, missionaries were their own first converts."

Dr. John Halbert, the president of Maryknoll School of Theology, is also interviewed. Maryknoll is the largest U.S. Roman Catholic missionary order.

Among other commentators are the Rev. Lonnie Turnipseed, head of the Southern Asian office of the National Council of Churches; Dr. Frederick Harrison, general secretary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church; and Alicia Nebot, who oversees Latin America affairs for the United Church of Christ's Board of World Ministries.

The BBC-produced series ran in England and elsewhere about a year ago to critical acclaim, according to VISN spokeswoman Susan Raisch.

It was written and narrated by Julian Pettifer, one of the British broadcast group's most honored current affairs and documentary reporters.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Mom provides 'ultimate shield'

NASHVILLE—A book based on Psalms 91, which is traditionally related to battle, was put together by a mother for her son in the Persian Gulf. The book is published by Hidden Manna.

Review

'Going Home to Gospel' featured on PBS

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Patti LaBelle hosts public television special "Come Home to Gospel" at Quinn Chapel, Chicago's oldest black church and a way station on the Underground Railway. The show airs March 6.

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Like many African-American entertainers, Patti LaBelle began singing gospel music as a youngster in a church choir and remained in the choir even after launching her professional career.

Ms. LaBelle's Broadway debut in "Your Arm's Too Short to Box with God" was itself connected with gospel music, and for her, returning to church has always been "going home."

Now, with her television special "Going Home to Gospel with Patti LaBelle," she hopes to introduce gospel music to a wider audience which does not usually listen to it.

On her program, from the Rev. P. David Saunders' welcoming call to "put your hands together and praise the Lord," we are launched into an electrifying hour-long celebration of rhythm and roots, of continuity and change in gospel music.

Viewers see immediately that this is audience-participation music in which those in the pews lift hands, clap and sway in the aisles.

"Going Home to Gospel with Patti LaBelle" includes both traditionalists such as the Mighty Clouds of Joy and Albertina Walker, "the Queen of Gospel," Ricky Dillard's wild, innovative New Generation Chorale and thoroughly contemporary teenager Deleon Richards.

Those who catch this Public Broadcasting special will see and hear the rich diversity of gospel music—which includes unabashedly evangelical lyrics and rap beats, somber tunes and shouting, child soloists and singing (and dancing) pastors.

". . . this program celebrates not only the music of the African-American church but also the way in which the church has sustained those who have witnessed for God and racial justice."

In addition to the musical performances, "Going Home to Gospel" includes the late Mahalia Jackson and brief reflections on the music by black preachers.

Taped live at beautiful Quinn Chapel, Chicago's oldest black congregation and a way station on the Underground Railroad, this program celebrates not only the music of the African-American church but also the way in which the church has sustained those who have witnessed for God and racial justice.

The program airs on most public television stations on Wednesday, March 6.

Mr. Goodhue, of Island Park, N.Y., frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

Series explores conflicting opinions on Gulf War

Compiled from news reports

Conflicting opinions on the Gulf War will be explored on "Catch the Spirit," the national television show of The United Methodist Church, during the week of March 3. (Check local listings for time and station.)

Studio guests representing differing perspectives on the war are James Holsinger, chief medical officer of the U.S. Veterans Health Services and Research Administration; the Rev. John D. Wolf, former Navy chaplain; and the Rev. Alex Awad, a Palestinian Christian.

Among issues highlighted in the program are the historical and cultural roots of the conflict, the human costs of war and how war affects individuals and families.

Mr. Awad, appearing with the Rev. William H. Harter, a Presbyterian expert on Israel, describes the suffering and persecution that has happened on both sides of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Mr. Awad, an American citizen and missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries, says he has experienced an increase in anti-Arab sentiment in the United States since the war began.

He adds that most Arab-Americans are third or fourth generation Americans.

The American flag is "the only flag they pledge allegiance to," he says, and some are fighting on the allied side in Saudi Arabia.

"They feel loyal to the American flag, loyal to this country, but yet they are fighting with their brothers and sisters in the Gulf," Mr. Awad adds.

Dr. Holsinger, lay leader of the Virginia Annual Conference, says the war is "a war that needs to be fought at this point," while Mr. Wolf, author of "Amen! Until Tomorrow: Retaking the Pacific after Pearl Harbor," says the real enemy is war itself.

A second special edition on the Persian Gulf War to air the week of March 10 focuses on how United Methodist congregations are helping people in this country cope with the war and how the war is affecting children, both in the United States and in the Middle East.

The two "Catch the Spirit" special editions focusing on the Gulf War are available to churches and individuals, says Wilford V. Bane, Jr., executive producer of the weekly television show.

"Because of the timely nature of these two programs and the need for study resources on the Persian Gulf crisis," he said, videotapes of the programs are being offered at $39.95 for the set.

To order, call EcuFilm at 1-800-251-4091.

UNITED METHODIST COMMUNICATIONS PHOTO BY RONNY PERRY

The Rev. Alex Awad (left) and the Rev. William Harter (center) discuss the Israeli-Palestinian question with co-host Hilly Hicks in a "Catch the Spirit" program to air the week of March 3. (Check local listings for time and station.) Two editions of the series will deal with issues of the Middle East and the Gulf War.

Dear Deborah

Why did you give up on marriage so soon?

Dear Deborah:

Regarding your answer to Gloria, why do you—and so many marriage counselors—give up on marriage so soon?

Maybe her husband can change. Maybe they both should talk to a pastor or counselor.

Please don't give up too early on sinners. Some need to hear and want to hear a redemptive message instead of being consigned to their own selected hells.

Joe

Dear Joe:

Why do you think we give up too early on sinners?

Gloria's husband apparently was not willing to talk to a pastor or counselor about saving their marriage and had made up his mind. Making other people change their minds is a futile exercise most of the time.

Gloria is grieving and needs help to survive. I do not think it would have helped her to hold out hope that she might save the marriage.

Gloria needs the support of friends and her church family, not lectures about sin.

Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Hymn proves enduring

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
There a precious fountain,
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.
In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

About a year ago, some original manuscripts of Mozart were discovered in a vault in the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The donor of these rare manuscripts was a daughter of William Howard Doane, a Cincinnati manufacturer and prolific hymn tune composer.

These manuscripts reflect the scope of Doane's personality and wide-ranging interests.

In 1889 France named him a Chevalier in the French Legion of Honor.

As a composer of hymn tunes, he had unusual success. Over a span of 53 years, he composed 2,300 tunes.

He had known the poems of Fanny Crosby that had been set to music by other composers. In 1868, he went to New York City to meet her.

He found her living in a tenement at 88 Varick Street. He was shocked by the squalor of the flat where she lived, but even more shocked to discover that she was blind.

From that meeting developed a collaboration that was to last for more than four decades and result in the writing of more than a thousand hymns.

A few months after they met, Doane sent Fanny Crosby a new tune he had composed. She listened carefully to the melody and then wrote "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross."

The hymn was published in a Sunday school songbook in 1869. It has proved to be one of the most enduring works of Crosby and Doane.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Take the Name of Jesus With You"

Support fueled by war

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—Support for Israel in the United States has increased considerably since the Persian Gulf war began, fueled partly by the Jewish state's policy of not retaliating against Iraqi missile attacks, according to a survey released by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The national poll of 600 registered voters was conducted by the Boston firm of Marttila & Kiley, Inc., Feb. 4-5 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent.

Sixty-three percent of those surveyed said the Israeli government's handling of its role since the Persian Gulf crisis began has given them a higher opinion of Israel.

Overall, the favorable rating of the current Israeli government went from 24 percent in December to 58 percent today.

Seventy-nine percent of the respondents said Israel should hold off retaliating against Iraq. But 59 percent of those said Israel should retaliate for a chemical attack; 37 percent would support a retaliation if Iraqi missile attacks continue for another month.

By a two-to-one margin, the people questioned said they believe the United States and its allies should continue fighting until Saddam Hussein is removed from power.

Twenty-three percent said the war should stop after Iraq withdraws from Kuwait.

In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, a majority of the public—50 percent—now believes that the Israeli response to the intifada (a "holy-war" action customarily associated with the Palestine Liberation Organization) has been "about right" while the proportion who feel the response has been too harsh is 33 percent.

LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

UNITED METHODIST EDUCATION OUTDOORS

CAMPING 1991

CAMPING SUNDAY IS MARCH 17

The Louisiana Conference has designated March 17 as the day to recognize the camping program within the Conference. Each church is asked to promote the summer camping program, sharing with the congregation the opportunities available to children, youth and adult counselors.

Brochures and registration forms are being prepared by each camp and should be available in your district office if they are not yet in your church.

On Camping Sunday, you might want to consider having a couple of participants from past years share their experiences. Or, invite someone from another church to talk for a few minutes about camping.

USKICHITTO Retreat Center

CAMP FIRST TIME
July 22-24
(completed grade 3)
ELEMENTARY I
July 8-12
(completed grades 4-6)
ELEMENTARY II
August 5-9
(completed grades 4-6)

JUNIOR HIGH
(completed grade 7)
SENIOR HIGH
July 26-28
(completed grades 9-12)

OLD TIME CAMP MEETING
June 16-21
(for all ages)
FAMILY CAMP
August 30-September 2
(for all ages)
For further information contact:
Uskichitto Retreat Center
P.O. Box 118
LeBlanc, LA 70651

The five day camps will cost $85 and will include a photograph. The three-day camps will cost $55 and will also include a photograph. There is a $5 discount for early registration. Special family rates are available for Camp Meeting and Labor Day Weekend Family Camps!

Camp First Time 1990 — Deans: Rev. Larry Martin and Yvonne Martin

All ages enjoy camping

Why Church Camping?

The Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church has summer camping programs for children and youth, grades 3-12. These experiences occur at the three camp sites within the state. All camping opportunities are open to anyone, although the sites are supported by specific districts.

Church camping helps to bring about the union of God, ourselves, our peers, and the environment. Through the camping experience, campers are encouraged to see themselves in a new way as they learn to live in a responsible community, caring for each other and God's creation.

Church camping moves the classroom out of doors and seeks to use these resources to teach campers about the wonder of the world and the greatness and majesty of the God who created the world. The Christian commitment of the volunteers is the primary issue that sets church camping apart from the experiences of other groups.

Church camps are the place where situational learning happens at its best. The teaching situation in camp involves everything that happens during the week. No other arrangement of church life affords as great an opportunity for continuous Christian nurture and growth as does living together twenty four hours a day in a Christian atmosphere.

Church camping can be a meaningful and lasting experience for children and youth, as well as for the counselors. Through the years, lives have been changed through our United Methodist Camping Program. Campers are given the chance to experience the love of God in their encounter with the natural world and the guidance of committed counselors.

This poem, shared after a CCE camp, expresses beautifully **WHY CHURCH CAMPING?**

So many emotions,
So many beautiful memories,
So many special people,
So much LOVE.

It's a star-studded sky
Covering a peaceful lake;
A flower of perfection
Growing from roots of LOVE.

It's learning
To talk to God,
In a time of Peace
And a community of LOVE.

It's finding gifts
You never discovered before,
And sharing your gifts
With people you LOVE.

It's hugs
That mean more than mere words,
And encouraging smiles
That heal a broken heart.

It's taking it easy
With a friend you feel
You've known forever,
Yet only met a few days ago.

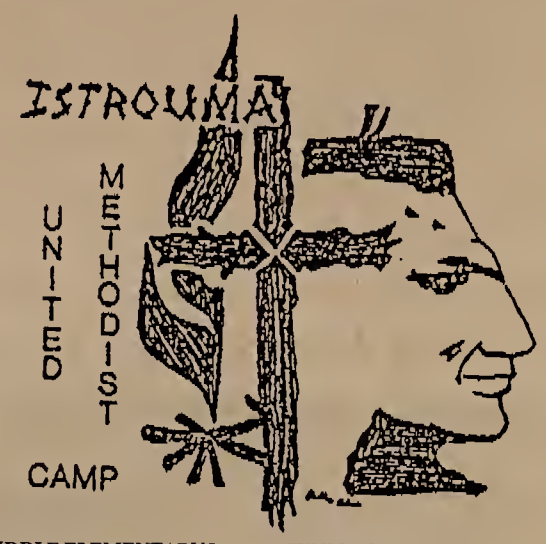
It's a place to open your heart
A place of acceptance.
It's a place to give love,
And feel it being given right back.

It's chicken fights in the lake.
And mudderball in the puddles.
It's sbaring a bond of friendship,
And keeping a bond of LOVE.

It's daring to fly, to be free,
To move on to the next level,
It's laughing at sunny-sided riddles,
And singing wonderful songs.

And what exactly is CCE?
Mere words cannot express,
It's experiencing God
In a special way-through LOVE.

Angie Anderson
New Iberia



MIDDLE ELEMENTARY I
June 24-28
(entering grades 3 & 4)
Mary Core/Esther Hammond
MIDDLE ELEMENTARY II
July 22-26
(entering grades 3 & 4)
Lylin Craig
OLDER ELEMENTARY I
July 8-12
(entering grades 5 & 6)

OLDER ELEMENTARY II
July 29-August 2
(entering grades 5 & 6)
David Dietzel/Andy Foreman

JUNIOR HIGH I
June 17-21
(entering grades 7 & 8)
Melissa Draper/Ted Standley

JUNIOR HIGH II
August 5-9
(entering grades 7 & 8)
Don Ross/Ed Dilworth
SENIOR HIGH
June 10-14
(entering grades 9-12)
Bliss Spillar
METHODIST HOME CAMP
July 15-19
(entering grades 10-12)
Dolores Giles

For further information contact:
Camp Istrouma
P.O. Box 333
Greenwell Springs, LA 70739

All camps will cost $70 which includes a camp T-shirt. There will be a $5 late fee for registrations received less than ten days before the camp.

Istrouma Camp participants

District Coordinators

Each of the districts within the Louisiana Conference has elected a District Camping Coordinator.

If you have any questions about the camping program, contact the coordinator in your district. In some cases, the coordinator can suggest someone who could come to your church to talk about the camping program.

Acadiana District:
Rev. Weldon Bares,
101 Live Oak Blvd.
Lafayette, LA 70503
(318) 984-4211
Alexandria District:
Rev. Ricky Willis
Box 577
Olla, LA 71465
(318) 495-5534
Baton Rouge District:
Rev. James Mitchell
4205 Church Street
Zachary, LA 70791
(504) 654-2389
Lake Charles District:
Mr. Sam Burch
1036 Ann Street
Westlake, LA 70669
(318) 439-8630
Monroe District:
Rev. Douglas Foreman
1807 Loop Road
Winnsboro, LA 71295
(318) 435-4392
New Orleans District:
Rev. Mike Ricke
3741 Pontiac
Metairie, LA 70002
(504) 888-4665
North Shore District:
Pleasant Sibley
P.O. Box 207
Walker, LA 70785
(504) 665-8006
Ruston District:
Rev. Kurt Oheim
903 Broadway
Minden, LA 71055
(318) 377-1483
Shreveport District:
Rev. Scott Adams
520 Herndon Street
Shreveport, LA 71101
(318) 221-5207

CANEY CONFERENCE CENTRE

Caney Conference Centre

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE I
June 24-29
(currently in grades 9-12)
Lorris Wimberly

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE II
July 22-27
(currently in grades 9-12)
Lorris Wimberly

Cost for the Christian Community Experiences will be $97. For more information concerning dates and cost of others camps please contact:

Caney Conference Centre
P.O. Box 707
Minden, LA 71055

Yes, YOU Are Needed as a Counselor this Summer

Camp Counseling is:

An OPPORTUNITY for service to the church

A CHANCE to be a positive influence to campers in their growth and development.

An OCCASION for you to be a part of camping as you help make it happen.

YOU can be one of the men and women who volunteer this year to serve as a camp counselor. If you are interested — review the variety of camping experiences offered, decide which week(s) you are available for counseling and which age level you feel most comfortable counseling and then send a letter of recommendation from your pastor to Conference Camping, Carolyn Dove, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802.

The Conference Office will send information to the Camp Directors who are responsible for contacting you for enlistment.

Caney Conference Centre participants

P- LICOMP 016
CAROLYN GARSION
CENTENARY COLLEGE
LIBRARY BOX 4188
SHREVEPORT LA 71104

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

IE 137 NUMBER 41 018000 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 MARCH 8, 1991

See You At The Gathering!

An Overwhelming Response

The Bishop's Pastoral Letter read in our Louisiana Churches on January 20 has produced an avalanche of responses. Over 500 names of loved ones have come into my office.

These names are being published in this issue of the **Louisiana United Methodist Reporter.** In addition I have written each one personally to let them know that our prayers, care, and support are with them.

We rejoice that this terrible war has ended and pray that our service men and women will be able to return to us soon. In the meantime, please continue to pray for those still in the Middle East, those serving in other military bases and for the loved ones left behind who need our arms around them.

Let the prayers, care, and support of the whole church continue!

William B. Oden

Louisiana United Methodists Can Make a Difference

A few short days before the war in the Persian Gulf region started the question was asked, "How are United Methodists going to be involved?" This question was asked at the January meeting of LaVOAD (Louisiana Voluntary Organizations Aiding in Disasters). At that time there were no clear answers to the question. Since then however many of our local churches have responded to the crises and a United Methodist presence is being felt.

At times like these we often look to the Annual Conference for direction and programs. However, each of our communities has its own unique function so that one general program cannot meet each community's unique needs. Here, therefore, are some suggestions to tailor each local church's response to members who have been involved in the Persian Gulf crisis. Each church may first:

1. Do an immediate survey of its area and determine what needs are being met and which ones are not.
2. Focus on the needs that are not currently being met in the community.
3. Select a committee in your church to plan your response.

Likewise, here are several options of ministry that each church might explore:

1. Volunteer your services either at the VA or other hospitals as counselors to the wounded or their families.
2. Open your church for support groups.
3. Start a support group.
4. Have a one-day program for the special needs of the families whose loved ones are still in tbe Gulf. These programs could address such issues as financial affairs, job security, legal rights, how to write a resume, how to establisb car pooling, activities for children, etc.
5. Open our cburches as shelters for repatriates.
6. Help with food or bills for families whose primary bread winner is in the military. You might consider talking to the Veterans of Foreign Wars or the United Way about funding and the management of finances.
7. Offer free babysitting during specified hours for parents so that they can take care of business.
8. Develop and offer a Grief Support Group for those whose loved ones have been killed in action.
9. Hold special worship services of thanksgiving.
10. Set aside several pews for those in your congregation who have loved ones still in the military.
11. Have your youth set up a table at church with post cards so that members might write a note to someone in the service. The youth could mail the cards or include them in a package to a service person.
12. List your members in your bulletin and church newsletter.
13. Call them by name in your time of Joys and Concerns and especially during the Pastoral Prayer.

It is clearly evident that there are many ways that we can respond with the love of God to those who have been hurt during this time of war. It is our hope that your church will consider one of the above ministries or any other with which you feel more comfortable. It is vitally important that the church of God be seen as being in ministry during these times. If you develop one of these ministries, please contact the office of your mayor, Emergency Preparedness, the Red Cross and the press. Get the information out so that those in need will know where to come for help.

If your church is willing to respond or has already responded we would like to hear from you in the Conference office. Please write down what type of ministry your church is doing in this area and send it to the Reverend Dr. Donald C. Cottrill, Executive Director, Conference Council on Ministries, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

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PFC Chad Wilson
Major Michael N. Beard
Cpl. P. E. Church III
Lt. Alfred G. Kyle, U.S.M.C.
E4 Randall J. McCoskey
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Glenn Johnson
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The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Suicide double-talk: No-no

Double-talk—language that is intentionally unclear or misleading—is rarely, if ever, justifiable.

It is particularly offensive when it obscures or denies fundamental moral and spiritual realities.

Case in point: Recent advice given to a United Methodist task force on AIDS affirmed the option of "self-deliverance"—in other words, suicide—for people facing a "slow, painful death" (UMR, March 1).

We do not doubt the humane intent behind such an affirmation. The law of love requires followers of Christ to temper with compassion any moral judgment about a prayerful decision to end irreversible suffering.

We object, however, to the use of terms like "self-deliverance" to describe such decisions.

First, such euphemisms obscure the agonizing moral dilemma that suicide poses even under conditions of extreme suffering.

Scripture and Christian tradition offer ambiguous guidance about suicide. For example, in at least one case—Samson's death—the Bible implies divine favor for a suicidal act (Judges 16:23-31). However, the commandment against murder makes no exception for oneself.

Viewed in that light, and some 2,000 years of near silence on suicide by our spiritual ancestors, contemporary Christians should resist renaming it in a way that suggests an age-old moral dilemma has been resolved. It has not.

Second, the term "self-deliverance" falsely implies that we humans can save ("deliver") ourselves.

Such a term, whether applied to a specific act such as suicide or to human life overall, is symptomatic of an insidious secular mindset.

According to that mindset—the barrenness of which is revealed, for example, in the writings of novelist John Updike—human deeds alone can wrest from life all one needs for joy and meaning.

By contrast, the Christian faith offers a profound refutation of such a mindset: Life that is fully human, and therefore truly meaningful, cannot be lived apart from reliance upon God.

As Christians, we proclaim a God Who is Creator (Father), Redeemer (Son) and Sustainer (Holy Spirit). This is not merely a formal theological assertion.

Rather, it is a witness to an authentic and hopeful reality in an otherwise hopeless world. Namely, even in the most desperate circumstances, God is present. We need not, indeed we cannot, "save" ourselves.

We should resist any double-talk, however well intended, that would cloud that reality.

Instead, we should name and deal forthrightly with life's tough circumstances for what they are—tough—and prayerfully seek God's guidance at all times for how best to live and how to die.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

The law of love requires followers of Christ to temper with compassion any moral judgment about a prayerful decision to end irreversible suffering. We object, however, to the use of terms like "self-deliverance" to describe such decisions.

Letters to the Editor

UM bishops challenged to support Palestinians

The Feb. 15 issue included a "Faithwatch" article headlined, "Concern for Israel," which listed five United Methodist bishops who signed a newspaper advertisement sponsored by the American Jewish Committee.

The ad voiced outrage and concern for the people of Israel as a result of the Iraqi missile attacks.

There would be few U.S. citizens, including me, who have not been outraged by these attacks.

Now, I and many others within the United Methodist Church are wondering: Following the end of this war, just how much leadership will these same bishops provide in seeking the implementation of the United Nations resolutions that request Israel to stop their inhumane treatment of the Palestinians?

James E. Lansdowne, II
Wichita, Kansas

Editorial reassuring

Thank you for your editorial headlined, "Counter fear with faith," in the Feb. 15 issue.

Your penetrating interpretation of Scripture . . . while the Gulf War was raging . . . was reassuring and hopeful when many people were caught in the grip of fear and anxiety.

Nuell C. Crain
Dallas, Texas

What else is new?

Thanks to Stephen L. Swecker we are informed of the anti-war sentiment that prevailed at the World Council of Churches assembly (see UMR, Feb. 15).

We are also made aware of Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke's address after which he was firmly rebuked by WCC president Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorious for his stance in defense of the multi-national war effort.

Well, what else is new? We've heard the same thing from Saddam Hussein himself, the PLO, Libya, Jordan, Cuba, China, Yemen, etc.

The guest who will insult his host, is a very strange guest indeed. Prime Minister Hawke must be a real gentleman or else he would have tossed the entire WCC tribe into the ocean and told them to swim home.

May God bless the brave people who have the courage to oppose evil in this world.

And the WCC claims to represent Christians? Hardly!

C.D. Maxwell
Ocala, Florida

I was 'carpet bombed'

Your Jan. 25 editorial assessment of the basic approaches to Christian views of war was most commendable. And your conclusion that our leaders made a defensible decision in the Middle East is courageous, especially in light of the frequently negative (sometimes ridiculously so) statements expressed by some of the United Methodist leadership.

However, last night my sleep routine was carpet-bombed by the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell's unbelievable comments in the Feb. 8 article headlined, "Is tough moral discourse too meaty for TV?"

Of course, I share Ms. Campbell's abhorrence of war as an option. War is never, or at the least, seldom, the glorious "golden banner" award-winner as a wonderful alternative.

Insane as war is, however, sometimes it is the only avenue open as a sane choice. Glaringly absent in Ms. Campbell's statements is any direct reference to the abominable acts of cruelty, immorality, wanton destruction and the despicable conduct of Iraqi forces against Kuwait and its people. But she has no hesitancy in condemning the carpet bombing of Iraqi military installations.

It's bad enough when such muddled thinking comes from the followers. How much more compounded the disgrace is when it comes from the leaders.

Ralph E. Maynard
Kissimmee, Florida

Testimony questioned

As one who testified before the Task Force on Homosexuality, I would like to comment regarding the report in the Feb. 15 issue.

The testimony received by the task force does not, in my opinion, represent the members of the United Methodist Church.

The communication inviting testimony before the task force was not made sufficiently known. When we attended "The Gathering" in Fort Worth in October, two United Methodist ministers sitting next to us were not aware that the task force was receiving testimonies.

Our church is one of the 10 largest in our conference and I do not remember any local church publicity being communicated about the opportunity to testify. I found out about the task force coming here through the Reporter and wrote for permission to testify.

It is my suspicion, admittedly undocumented, that homosexuality advocates focused on gaining a maximum hearing for their "side."

This is not to decry their advocacy, but to suggest that their testimonies do not reflect the opinions of the total United Methodist membership.

Jarvis P. Brown
Anaheim, California

Here I Stand

Do we make church careers 'ultimate prize'?

By BRUCE DAVIS

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Bruce Davis is pastor of University United Methodist Church, St. Louis, Mo. (Missouri East Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Novelist Susan Howatch has written a popular series of books on the lives of Church of England clergy set during World War II.

The first in the series, "Glittering Images," fell more into the Jacqueline Suzanne school of literature. The second, "Glamorous Powers," was a far more compelling novel. The book that has most fascinated me, however, is the latest in the series, "Ultimate Prizes."

The central character in "Ultimate Prizes" is an ambitious, talented minister named Neville Aysgarth.

Aysgarth has reached for the prizes the church has to offer—status, an esteemed position in the hierarchy, power and influence—and has grabbed many of them. Nevertheless, he has fallen into something of a pit.

At one point he confesses to a spiritual director that something has gone very wrong, his life has become a wasteland, and he's on the brink of losing his career in the church. The abbot responds, "Your career in the church?"

"Yes, I'm actually rather successful . . . "

"And what about your life of service to God?" said the Abbot of Ruydale. "That surely is more important than any career in the Church?"

"Ah, yes," says Neville Aysgarth.

Not a bad question

That's not a bad question for United Methodist ministers to ask ourselves once in a while during our own self-examination: "What prize are we after?"

I am not ashamed to have made a career of ministry in the United Methodist connection. But as another annual conference approaches, including another round of appointments complete with moves and rumors of moves, and inevitable discussions of who is moving ahead and who is not, it seems important to ask what prize we're really after—the prize of a famous career or the prize of service to God?

I do not believe the above-mentioned categories are mutually exclusive. I'm beginning to get the idea that some of the esteemed situations that have looked pretty cushy from a distance carry their own crosses of heavy responsibility for those who drink from this cup.

Careers can become idols

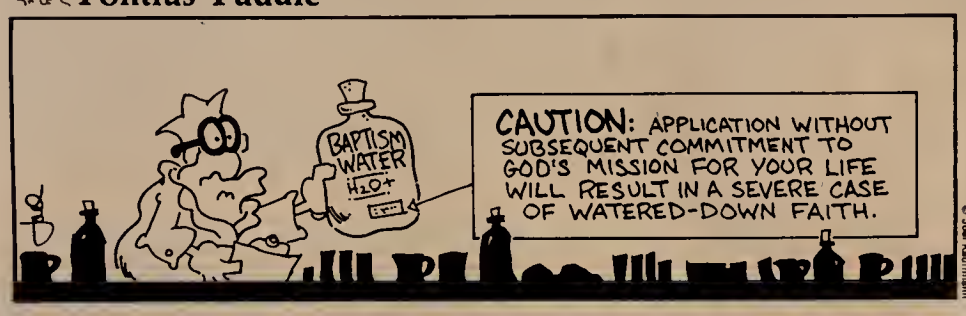
But if our careers in the church become the ultimate prize rather than service to God, then even our careers can become idols that lead us away from God and into the pit. You know that, I know that—but I think we need to keep reminding each other.

To paraphrase Jesus, what does it gain a pastor if he or she gains Big Time United Methodist Church but loses his or her life?

Keep those who aspire to both in your prayers. And let us all—lay and clergy—press on together for the prize of the upward call of God in Jesus Christ.

It's the only prize that ultimately matters.

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"Jesus does not merely point the way toward peace. Jesus is peace. To call ourselves His disciples is to commit ourselves to peace itself, for peace is what Jesus is. We Christians struggle with Jesus' teachings about peace when the real struggle is what to do with Jesus, who is peace—the Prince of Peace."
—United Methodist Bishop Kenneth W. Hicks, Kansas Area

* * *

"Christians need to reappropriate the Bible's gritty recognition that the presence and reality of the demonic affects how we do ministry and carry on our witness. . . . We need to remind ourselves that the New Testament's talk of demons and spiritual warfare is more than exaggerated metaphor. We must consider what it means to put on the spiritual armor St. Paul describes."
—Timothy K. Jones, "Christianity Today"

* * *

"The resurgence of racism in our communities, colleges and churches is a painful reminder of the brokenness in the family of God. . . . It is complex to get at the root of our corporate problem. It is sometimes hard to confess our own complicity in the sin of racism and to be willing to be transformed. But that is exactly what God will do with us if we present willing, although broken, hearts."
—The Rev. Charlene Kammerer, district superintendent, Florida Conference

* * *

"As far as I know Jesus never ran a business meeting. He was too busy talking to fallen angels at the 7-11."
—The Rev. John P. Miles II, United Methodist minister and author, "United Methodist Renewal"

* * *

"The pastor who meticulously calculates hours 'worked' so as not to give more than agreed upon will soon see Calling diminish into employment. The congregation or parishioner who holds that a pastor perform certain functions for which he or she is paid will lose a minister and gain an employee."
—Bishop Woodie W. White, Illinois Area

* * *

"In a quiet and yet extraordinary revolutionary way, Christ simply didn't 'buy into' the sexism of His day. What He did was to treat every woman He ever met exactly as He treated every man. . . . When it came to the most important piece of evidence that has ever been given to the world—namely, the announcement of the resurrection of Our Lord—He entrusted that to some human beings whose testimony would not ever have stood up in court. He trusted women to keep it straight and to get the message across."
—The Rev. John Claypool, rector, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Welcome to new readers in Bryan, Texas

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some of 1,600 member-families of **First United Methodist Church in Bryan, Texas** (Texas Annual Conference).

This is the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Bryan, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself."

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : ____

(Last week's answer: Titus 1:15)

Readings for week of March 11

Monday: Psalms 137:1-6
Tuesday: Psalms 138
Wednesday: 2 Chronicles 36:14-23
Thursday: John 3:1-13
Friday: John 3:14-21
Saturday: Ephesians 2:4-10
Sunday: Ephesians 2:11-22

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

NO GUARANTEE OF PEACE: The end of the Gulf War will not guarantee peace in the Middle East as long as militarization there continues at past levels, a student of Jewish-Palestinian relations told the United Methodist panel on international affairs Feb. 25. The spread of arms, said Jonathan Boyarin, is "fuel for the conflict, not the result of it." Mr. Boyarin, a practicing Jew affiliated with the International Jewish Peace Union, which seeks to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel, said alternatives in the Middle East cannot be discussed as long as militarization continues.

ILLEGAL PRACTICE: A federal administrative judge has ruled that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is illegally discriminating by refusing to consider women for employment as Catholic chaplains. In an Equal Employment Opportunities Commission case, Judge Juan E. Vigil ruled that it is illegal for the V.A. to require that Catholic chaplains be ordained priests because the requirement discriminates against women. Anthony J. Principi, the deputy secretary of veterans affairs, said the ruling, if upheld, would have far-reaching consequences because the ordination requirement applies to all chaplains.

CLOSING THE GAP: A panel of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. is recommending a series of steps to close a long-standing breach between the denominational bureaucracy and an unofficial church renewal group. Over the past year, the panel has been considering the church's relationship with the Presbyterian Lay Committee—a Pennsylvania-based organization that has rankled church bureaucrats with a constant barrage of criticism of the church's liberal theological and social pronouncements. Now the panel is urging church leaders to reach out, to listen, to forgive and to compromise with respect to the Lay Committee.

SUSPICIOUS FIRES: A state task force has been established to investigate a rash of suspicious fires that have destroyed churches throughout Florida since July. The fires have taken place at churches of various affiliations, including African Methodist Episcopal, United Methodist, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Nazarene. The first one, July 22, heavily damaged an African Methodist Episcopal Church in rural Jackson County. Suspicious blazes have occurred at one church in Fort Myers, two in Gainesville, six in Winter Haven and a regional church office in Orange County.

Panel OKs proposed worship services

Communion, baptism, weddings among services considered for changes

By THOMAS McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Your new United Methodist Book of Worship probably will cost about $25 and is proposed to have numerous new services in its 400 or so pages.

The hardback book is being developed for pastors, musicians and laypeople who plan and lead worship in local congregations, not for use in the pew.

All resources needed beyond the local church, such as services of ordination, are proposed to be in a separate softbound volume of approximately 128 pages.

The special study committee preparing the worship book made a final review of more than half the content Feb. 25-27.

Services approved

Receiving committee approval were services for Holy Communion, baptism, weddings, funerals, healing, daily prayers, occasional services such as love feasts and blessing of a home.

At its next meeting, the committee will review services of the Christian Year and a variety of prayers and litanies.

The new Book of Worship will feature:

✓ Permission to print the material in bulletins;

✓ The New Revised Standard Version as the basis for Scripture readings;

✓ Thousands of references to the recently published United Methodist Hymnal;

✓ Instructions for worship leaders printed in red;

✓ Large print for ease of reading from the pulpit;

✓ Modern English.

Resources included

Services in the book will include:

■ Brief Communion service for use with persons who are ill or unable to leave home;

■ Traditional infant baptism;

■ Wedding and anniversary prayers;

■ Resources for funerals, including a service for stillborn children;

■ Music resources for worship;

■ Complete, three-year lectionary;

■ Collects and acts of worship for the Christian year;

■ Non-Western services, such as Las Posadas from the Hispanic tradition, the wake from the black tradition, and the Green Corn Ceremony from the Native American tradition;

■ Resources for special days, such as World Communion Sunday and Mother's Day;

■ Blessings for persons, including those beginning school or retiring;

■ Midweek prayer service;

■ Presentation of Bibles to children.

The process for developing the book included surveys of all United Methodist pastors, conference lay leaders, bishops, members of the 1988 General Conference, and 400 persons who led training events for the new hymnal.

Content reviewed

The proposed content has been reviewed by 22 ethnic consultants; 40 professors of worship, music and theology in all 13 United Methodist seminaries; and 25 international authorities on liturgy and music.

The 24-member committee will review remaining content at its next meeting at Lake Junaluska, N.C., July 14-18. Last-minute details will be considered when the committee meets one day prior to the semi-annual meeting of the denomination's Board of Discipleship in October.

After consideration by the full board, the proposed book will go to the General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body meeting in Louisville, Ky., in 1992.

The July meeting of the committee will be held in conjunction with the biennial convocation of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts, a 2,500-member group organized in 1956.

The Book of Worship was proposed by delegates to the 1988 General Conference and assigned to the Board of Discipleship for development. Chair of the Book of Worship planning committee is Bishop Susan M. Morrison (Philadelphia Area).

Retired Bishop Borgen disassociates himself from worship book's work

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—A retired bishop who has served on the worship book study committee has disassociated himself from its work.

Upon completion of the committee's most recent work, retired United Methodist Bishop Ole Borgen from Europe, who teaches at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky., asked that his name be removed from the committee's report and the new book.

He later told United Methodist News Service that "Scripture as the sole authority for faith and practice is not reflected in many places in the book, as it must be."

While affirming much in the volume, he said "two different interpretations about the way Scripture is normative" exist. He described himself as a systematic theologian who is "not evangelical, but Wesleyan."

He said he has no antagonism toward any committee member but cannot "put my name to everything in the book, although I affirm much of it."

He would not give specific examples, saying he wanted to avoid "engaging in polemics."

At previous meetings of the committee, he frequently objected to broad use of language, particularly referring to God.

During the most recent meeting, he objected to inclusion of the term "Almighty God" in parentheses as an option for "Father Almighty" in a prayer of the "great thanksgiving" section of Holy Communion.

> *"I question the integrity of what he has done to us as a committee and the process . . ."*
> —Susan M. Morrison

The Rev. Andy Langford, general editor for the book, said some people mistakenly believe that the committee is eliminating from the book traditional language for the trinitarian formula of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit." However, he said, "This is not true" (see UMR, Nov. 9).

While Bishop Borgen asked that his name be removed from the book and announced that he will not attend the committee's next meeting, he later told United Methodist News Service that he was not resigning.

Bishop Susan M. Morrison (Philadelphia Area), committee chair, expressed "extreme disappointment" at Bishop Borgen's action.

"I question the integrity of what he has done to us as a committee and the process we have been using," she said.

"In many ways we have been a community of faith in covenant together. We have worshiped, shared our stories, played and worked hard together, always honoring one another into a consensus that has reflected the diversity of who we are together," she said.

Bishop Borgen
. . . removes his name

Praising the book, she said, "I believe the traditions and perspectives that Bishop Borgen represents have been clearly reflected in the book. We have had a strong evangelical and Wesleyan presence throughout the process, with the committee, and with our consultants, all of whom have unanimously confirmed our work so far."

—THOMAS McANALLY

Women's rights agency changes leadership style

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

OKLAHOMA CITY—United Methodism's advocacy and monitoring agency for women's rights voted recently to change one of its leadership modes.

Since its inception in 1972 the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women has operated in two ways differently than other boards and agencies of the church.

One which remains unchanged is a consensus form of deliberation, wherein persons not in agreement with the general consensus may "stand outside" the consensus.

Any two may, if they feel strongly enough about it, "block" the consensus by saying they wish to do so. Discussion then must continue until consensus is achieved within the 48-member agency.

The other unusual operating style has been a three-person general secretariat. Other United Methodist entities have one general secretary and one or more associate secretaries.

The women's rights agency's leadership was changed—at least temporarily—at the agency's meeting Feb. 21-24 in Oklahoma City.

A report from the agency's finance committee indicated that lower income expectations supported reducing top-level management by at least one person.

Income for 1991 is projected at $469,740, based upon expectations of income from World Service, grants, newsletter sales and about $1,000 of other miscellaneous income. That is down from the 1990 budget total of $486,393.

Some commissioners favored changing to a single chief executive officer and one or more staff associates or assistants.

Others opposed any move that would change what they saw as the agency's statement to the church at large that leadership need not fall into a patriarchal, male-dominant, non-consensual form of direction.

Finally, after intensive discussion, the commission chose to go to a two-person secretariat leadership package. Several persons stood outside the consensus but did not feel strongly enough about their dissent to call for a block of the consensus.

The decision was made easier by the pre-meeting announcement that two of the secretariat would retire this year. They are the Rev. Nancy Grissom Self, who joined the staff in 1972, and Kiyoko Kasai Fujiu, who began in 1978.

Cecelia M. Long will continue as the sole general secretary while the commission's search committee interviews to fill the other spot. The new co-general secretary is expected to be in place by July 1.

Legislative proposals for the church's 1992 General Conference are expected to be the main agenda items at the commission's next meeting Sept. 25-29 in Chicago.

Two retiring agency officials cited for 'shining light' on women's status

Reporter Staff Special

OKLAHOMA CITY—United Methodism's first black woman bishop recently praised the Rev. Nancy Grissom Self and Kiyoko Kasai Fujiu for "shining light on the inferior position of women in the church and the surrounding community."

Kiyoko Fujiu

Retired Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly, now a professor at Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley, was the farewell speaker for the two retiring leaders of the church's General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

Bishop Kelly said that these two have helped many people understand that women have been and continue to be victims of aspects of life in the United Methodist Church and American society at large.

Ms. Self and Ms. Fujiu will retire June 30.

Bishop Kelly called on the commission and the church to continue the work of the commission begun under leadership of the two women.

She said she recalled hearing a young woman pastor of a "high-steeple" church support the proposal at the church's 1988 General Conference to discontinue the commission.

The bishop added, "I wanted to ask her—'Don't you know how you got that appointment?'" The move to disband the agency subsequently failed.

The bishop said that women pastors who are appointed to large-membership pastorates "owe that progress" to the commission and to efforts of Ms. Self and Ms. Fujiu.

"Nan and Kiyo have thrown light on these things for us," Bishop Kelly said.

Then, in an emotion-choked voice, she said, "I know that I would not be a bishop of the church without the work of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women."

—DON DONATO

Nancy Self

Quick-issue leaflet helps children cope with war

BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—The publishing executive said the caller from Wisconsin made this plea:

"Please send 12 of your pamphlets on children and war. Our children are looking for Iraqis under their beds."

That typifies response internationally to an extraordinary United Methodist leaflet, "Helping Children Cope with War," said Jack Gilbert, executive of interpretive services for the United Methodist Publishing House.

As part of the Feb. 28-March 3 meeting of the church's General Board of Discipleship, Mr. Gilbert was telling the the Curriculum Resources Committee about production and distribution of the 4-page pamphlet.

The leaflet was the inspiration of Doris Willis, children's editor with United Methodism's Church School Publications.

Ms. Willis began work on the pamphlet immediately after the Persian Gulf War broke out Jan. 16, Mr. Gilbert explained.

"Doris put in three 16-hour days, calling child psychologists all around the country to get information for the pamphlet," he said.

"Then she single-handedly recruited key people to produce it in record time."

The leaflet was available from the publishing house within days of war's outbreak. Usually, curriculum can take months or years to produce.

Through March 1, the leaflet's distribution totalled 28,600 copies. A second printing of 12,000 is still available.

Each copy carries authority for the user to reproduce it for others.

February research by the publishing house's Curric-U-Phone telemarketing unit estimates that at least 150,000 copies are in circulation, Mr. Gilbert said.

Word-of-mouth affirmation of the leaflet resulted in hundreds being distributed even before promotional efforts were started, he added.

"A television station in Florence, Ala., did a story on it," he noted.

"One caller sent three to friends in France who have relatives on duty in Saudi Arabia.

"The leader of a two-day workshop for chaplains ordered 60 for participants.

"A man ordered 800 to leave at grocery stores around his town."

The pamphlets have been distributed in 49 states, France and Canada, he said.

Ms. Willis told the Reporter that the overwhelming reception of the leaflet "answered my prayer."

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SUE BENNETT COLLEGE SEEKS applications and nominations for the position of President. This 2-year liberal arts college in Southeastern Kentucky is related to the General Board of Global Ministries. Contact: Ed LeMaster, 168 Lincoln Dr., London, KY 40741. Telephone: (606) 864-9379. Applications due by April 15.

SOUTHWEST TEXAS ANNUAL Conference position for Associate Conference Director for Age Group, Family and Nurture Ministries available June 1, 1991. Master's degree in Christian education with at least 5 years experience. Full benefits, all expenses plus continuing education; salary negotiable. For information: Jack O. Heacock, Box 28098, San Antonio, TX 78284.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC. Established program. Two adult choirs, youth, children and handbells. Three morning worship services. Oakhurst United Methodist Church, Seminole, FL. Telephone (813) 391-4769.

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM: Full-time position. Coordinate/expand urban church-wide programs/activities. College degree and/or work experience. Vital Christian faith required. Competitive salary. Contact: John Stuart, Trinity UMC, 1738 Galloway Ave., Memphis, TN 38112. Deadline: 4/1/91.

POSITION AVAILABLE. DIRECTOR OF Children and Youth Ministries. Salary negotiable. Mail resume to: First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 86, Indianola, MS 38751.

EPWORTH CHILDREN'S HOME SEEKS Special Assistant to the Executive Director for Planned Giving: Residential treatment program for emotionally disturbed children, seeks executive to be responsible for strengthening planned giving, developing major donors and relationship with United Methodist churches. Requirements: minimum bachelors degree, experience in development with experience or training in planned giving, travel, evening and weekend work. Excellent salary and benefits commensurate with experience. Send resume to: Development Office, 110 N. Elm, St. Louis, MO 63119.

MINISTER OF EVANGELISM AND Program at a fast growing 15 year old, 1650-member church. Send resume to: Heritage United Methodist Church, 2680 Landmark Drive, Clearwater, FL 34621. Attention: Rev. David Landers.

ST. PAUL UMC ACCEPTING applications for full-time Director Christian Education. Congregation- 1000 plus membership. Undergraduate degree required, Christian education or related field desired. Salary negotiable with established benefits. Resume with references to: Julian Lazar, Pastor, Post Office Box 5446, Florence, SC 29502.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. Full-time position with responsibility of education for all ages in 850-member church. Position available in July. Send resume promptly: Search Committee, Stratford Hills UMC, 7740 Cherokee Road, Richmond, VA 23225.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF Centenary College of Louisiana (Shreveport) invites nominations and applications for the position of President to succeed Donald A. Webb who will retire June 1, 1991. Centenary College is an independent, selective, liberal arts college committed to quality undergraduate education and affiliated with the United Methodist Church. The President reports to the Board of Trustees and is responsible for the academic, administrative, and fiscal affairs of the college. We seek a dynamic individual with an earned doctorate. The candidate would have administrative abilities and leadership in development programs. The search committee will begin its review of candidates in early April. Persons willing to be considered should send a letter, resume and list of references. The committee will contact those nominated by others to inquire about their interest. Address correspondence to: Mr. Charles Ellis Brown, Co-chair, Presidential Search Committee, P.O. Drawer 2147, Shreveport, LA 71166-2147.

Faith connections

FUND RANKS FIRST: A "socially responsible" mutual fund started by two United Methodist clergymen in Washington has been rated first in performance among all balanced mutual fund institutions in the nation for 1990. "The Wall Street Journal," "Money" magazine and "Changing Times" magazine all put Pax World Fund at the top of their lists. Lipper Analytical Services, a national mutual fund rating service, said Pax World achieved a total return of 10.45 percent for 1990. Pax World, first fund of its kind, was launched by the Revs. Luther E. Tyson and J. Elliott Corbett of Washington in 1970.

COURT DOCKET: Questions of United Methodist Church law dealing with appointment and status of clergy and financial policy issues make up the spring docket of the denomination's highest court. Nine cases in all will be decided by the Judicial Council at its meeting April 24-27. They arise out of the Kentucky, Louisville, New Mexico, Southern New England, Iowa, and Rocky Mountain annual conferences; the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops; and the North Central Jurisdiction Court of Appeals.

GATHERING BY THE RIVER: Some 10,000 Louisiana United Methodists are expected to "gather by the river" (the Mississippi) in Baton Rouge March 9 as one regional follow-up to the church's international Gathering last fall in Fort Worth. High points will include a 2,000-voice choir, a banner from each of the Louisiana Annual Conference's 500 local churches, and follow-up services in many local churches the next day.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Was WCC 'hijacked'?

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Did some American religious officials who led a peace-seeking trip to the Middle East in December help "hijack" the World Council of Churches two months later?

That question hung unstated and unanswered but clearly implied last week.

It hung there following reports to United Methodist Reporter and United Methodist Review regional editors by two United Methodist journalists who returned recently from major newsmaking events.

The regional editors, attending their annual training sessions in Dallas, heard from UMR Associate Editor Stephen L. Swecker and United Methodist Communications Producer Bill Dale.

Mr. Swecker offered the "hijack" analysis as part of his remarks about the WCC's Seventh Assembly Feb. 7-20 in Canberra, Australia, which he covered for this newspaper.

Mr. Dale reported on the 18-member peace delegation that visited Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Cyprus in December. He accompanied the delegation as a video producer for the interfaith VISN network.

Mr. Dale identified three principal spokespersons among the group he accompanied to Baghdad just before Christmas.

They were the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, the National Council of Churches' General Secretary-elect the Rev. Joan Campbell and United Methodist Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area).

Wanted to appeal in person

In the days immediately preceding the Gulf War, Mr. Dale said, the delegation's intent was to appeal in person to both President George Bush and Saddam Hussein to resolve their differences diplomatically.

Problems arose almost immediately.

First, Bishop Browning made an unsuccessful attempt to see President Bush.

Then, while in the Middle East, the delegation heard that President Bush would receive Bishop Browning but the date set by the White House required Bishop Browning to leave the Middle East delegation a day early.

Meanwhile, repeated attempts to see Saddam Hussein failed.

Bishop Browning did meet subsequently with President Bush. And, according to Mr. Dale, when the Episcopal leader pleaded for extension of sanctions and avoidance of military conflict, the President responded by showing a list of atrocities compiled by Amnesty International and attributed to the Iraquis occupying Kuwait.

Bishop Browning reportedly left the White House convinced that President Bush intended to lead the nation into war.

Unable to persuade the leaders to avoid war, principal members of the peaceseeking delegation turned to the next opportunity for the voice of church communions to be heard collectively, namely the WCC assembly in Australia.

Two weeks later, on the last day of the two-week assembly, they succeeded in getting the WCC to adopt a statement calling for an unconditional ceasefire in the war.

Even in the assembly's earliest days it was apparent, said Mr. Swecker, that a well-organized faction of anti-war activists was going to make sure that the war became the assembly's major issue.

The assembly was, in fact, 'hijacked by anti-war fervor," he said. He defined "hijacked" as being "taken in an unplanned direction against the will and/or best interests of the body."

A 'just hijacking'?

It is open to interpretation whether it was a "just hijacking," he said.

But with Bishop Browning, Ms. Campbell and Bishop Talbert, among others, in the forefront, the assembly "spent moral capital on the war that was urgently needed on many other issues," some of which have far-reaching consequences, he said.

From the first day to the final debate, the dominance of the war issue in sermons, executive committee statements, press briefings and "peace" activities precluded sustained focus on any other issue, Mr. Swecker said.

He said nearly every effort to reinforce statements regarding the aggression of Saddam Hussein, identifying with Israel or balancing statements with other injustices in the Middle East was beaten back.

"In fairness," Mr. Swecker said, "some United Methodists made vigorous efforts to get read into the record and into the statement stronger indications that the assembly itself was aware that Saddam Hussein's actions were intolerable and reprehensible."

Among those were Bishop William Boyd Grove (West Virginia Area), he said, who tried on at least two occasions to amend the assembly's statement about environmental damage in the war zone.

Bishop Grove's amendment, he said, pointed out that the damage was caused by deliberate acts of "environmental terrorism" as well as by war action.

"I am not sure this was ever heard by the assembly, much less put into the final document," Mr. Swecker said.

The weightiest debate of the WCC Assembly was over a controversial amendment that would have adopted a near-pacifist stance, he said (see UMR, March 1).

The amendment read, "We call upon you (the churches) to give up any theological or moral justification for the use of military power ... and to become public advocates of a just peace," he said.

The amendment was adopted, then, on motion of Bishop Talbert, reconsidered by a slender 16-vote margin with only 526 delegates out of a possible 800 or more voted. After further debate, the controversial amendment was rejected.

By assembly's end, said Mr. Swecker, there were good feelings about what had been done.

However, he said, a sense that the world meeting had been orchestrated by U.S. church leaders was a source of "real discomfort" to some delegates and other participants.

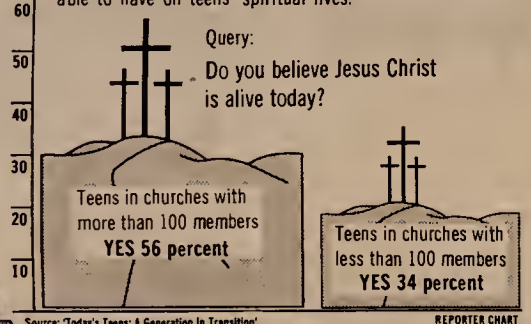
REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

DALLAS—UMR Associate Editor Stephen Swecker (left) and United Methodist Communications Producer Bill Dale converse during a regional editors' meeting with Sarah Kreutziger, editor of the Reporter's Louisiana Conference edition.

Faith Snapshot (First of four parts)

How does church size affect teen-agers' religious experiences?

Teen ministry in churches of less than 100 members may be considerably less effective than the ministries of larger churches. These findings of a recent study on teen-agers' religious experiences by Barna Research Group of Glendale, Calif., raise concerns about the impact smaller churches are able to have on teens' spiritual lives.



Source: 'Today's Teens: A Generation In Transition' REPORTER CHART

Harvard ecumenist rates WCC unity efforts

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

CANBERRA, Australia—A Harvard theologian and United Methodist advisor to the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches gave that body both high and low marks for its efforts to embrace diversity and promote church unity.

Professor Diana Eck, who teaches comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard University, cited numerous actions by the Canberra assembly that indicated a "new moment" in the WCC's efforts to embrace greater diversity.

China membership approved

Dr. Eck, who also attended the 1983 WCC assembly in Vancouver, mentioned the approval of the China Christian Council's WCC membership, expressions of reconciliation between North and South Korean church leaders, and the incorporation of some Dutch Reformed bodies into the ecumenical movement as "exciting examples of movement toward the goal of 'visible unity'."

As part of that trend, she also noted a "tremendous opening toward "applied interfaith dialogue." She was referring to the integration of people from other religious traditions into WCC deliberations rather than merely introducing them as "guests" and "observers." At least 12 people from other religions participated in the Canberra assembly.

She also noted the openness of the Seventh Assembly to the concerns of indigenous people such as the Aborigines of Australia, creating the possibility of what she called "inter-indigenous dialogue" and an expansion of concern about land rights and other rights of indigenous peoples.

Dr. Eck expressed deep concern, however, about the assembly's protracted agonizing over quotas to ensure balance and diversity in its committee membership.

Indeed, at one point during assembly proceedings, debate over the composition of the new seven-member presidium (later expanded to eight) became so wrangled that it was unable to continue and adjourned for the day without a resolution.

No longer a movement

She said that when all the factors related to diversity—region, denomination, sex, etc.—are taken into consideration, "we no longer have a movement, but a label that is counterproductive to the unity we seek."

Of quotas, she said: "It's not possible to overcome division by underlining division," paraphrasing the Indian pacifist leader, Mohandas Gandhi.

"We've generated a process that engenders more and more divisions ... people more concerned about getting a seat on the Central Committee than serving the vision of unity," Dr. Eck said.

Diana Eck
... gives WCC high, low marks.

Asian UMs making plans for international university

United Methodist News Service

Creation of an international university to prepare Asia's next generation of scientific, technical and world leaders is being pursued by the National Federation of Asian American United Methodists.

The federation's president, the Rev. Peter Sun of Potomac, Md., and its vice president, the Rev. Leo Hsu of Los Angeles, have entered into negotiations with officials of the Claremont, Calif., college system.

The system includes United Methodist-related School of Theology at Claremont, five undergraduate schools and one graduate school.

Mr. Hsu said the proposed Asian-American university would be largely staffed by United Methodist educators, administrators, board members and a president but will not be funded by the denomination and may not have official ties with the church.

Federation representatives are asking the Claremont system for 40 acres of land and inclusion as a separate undergraduate school. They are expected to present a detailed proposal for the university to Claremont officials in March; a decision could be reached by May.

As part of the Claremont structure, the proposed university would share most campus facilities but have separate dormitories and administrative buildings.

Noting the success of the 11 United Methodist-related historically black colleges, Mr. Hsu said it has long been a dream of Asian Americans in the church to have a university of their own in the United States.

In a cover article in the federation's January newsletter, "Asian American News," Mr. Sun said, "Leaders in and outside the church are slow to see the inevitable change in world direction."

Those leaders, he said, "are very quick to respond to changes in the European world but are painfully slow in responding to the changes of the Asia/Pacific region."

"Top Asian scholars" in the United States, many from the sciences, have been tapped for positions at the proposed university, Mr. Hsu said.

No steps have been taken by the federation to seek official church designation for the proposed university through the denomination's Board of Higher Education and Ministry or University Senate, said Ken Yamada, top staff executive of the board's Division of Higher Education.

Dr. Yamada, also a member of the Asian American Federation, said he consulted with Mr. Hsu and Mr. Sun in an unofficial capacity, not as a representative of the division or board.

"I do not consider this a church project at all," Dr. Yamada said of the federation proposal.

"We are not even certain of the institutional mission or the full endorsement of the federation."

Mr. Hsu said the $5 million-$10 million needed to create the university has been pledged by major Asian corporations including Honda, Toyota and Nissan, as well as Korean backers.

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New war revives old prophecies

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

The Persian Gulf war is the latest Middle East upheaval that has served to fuel popular speculation about Bible prophecy and the end times.

Throughout the 20th century and earlier, conservative Protestants have offered a bewildering variety of interpretations of sections of Scripture thought to point to the "end times" or "last days."

At prophecy conferences, the Gulf War has brought discussions to the Middle East, where it returns every time a major world event occurs in the ancient land of Palestine, and the possible battle of Armageddon.

The battle of Armageddon

Armageddon refers to the final battle of the age, predicted in Revelation 20, in which God destroys the armies of Satan and casts Satan into the bottomless pit.

Many scholars consider the most likely place for this event to be the valley between Mount Carmel and the city of Jezreel, in modern Israel.

Fundamentalist Christians are not the only people foreseeing Armageddon as the result of the Gulf War.

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan recently declared that "this war . . . will be that which the Scriptures refer to as Armageddon. This is the actual hour that the prophets have spoken of, and this war will not be confined to the Middle East."

However, some scholars consider such predictions to be old hat.

"As long as I've been teaching and reading religion, every time something happens in the Middle East, they say, 'This is it,'" says Carl Raschke, professor of religious studies at the University of Denver.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

JERUSALEM—An orthodox Jew stands on a hill overlooking an Arab village in East Jerusalem. Whenever a major world event occurs in this ancient land, speculations arise about biblical prophecy and the end of the world.

'Times of the Gentiles'

As far back as 1917, when the Turks abandoned Jerusalem to the British, the event was heralded by some as the end of the "times of the Gentiles" and a prelude to the restoration of Israel to Palestine.

This was believed to be a necessary event before the return of Christ. Some fundamentalists went so far as to say that the whole purpose of World War I was to free the Holy Land from the Turks.

Similar predictions were made when the modern state of Israel was established in 1948 and the city of Jerusalem was reunited in 1967.

The interest of conservative Christians in modern Israel and their political support for the Jewish state has led to the paradoxical situation of Israeli officials and Jewish leaders welcoming and honoring fundamentalists, while vehemently opposing their efforts to convert Jews to Christianity.

Some speakers at the conference disagreed about how to interpret the prophecies.

Edmund P. Clowney, president of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, said the Revelation prophecies of the rebuilt temple allude to the resurrected body of Christ.

Charles L. Feinberg, dean of Talbot Theological Seminary in Los Angeles, maintained that the prophecy was to be understood literally as referring to the structure.

Periodic attempts to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem have produced strife between Jews and Muslims because the site is now occupied by a Muslim mosque.

Fears that a radical Jewish group was going to lay a stone for a new temple led to rioting last October in which more than 17 Palestinians were fatally shot by Israeli police.

In addition to the rebuilding of the temple, the ancient city of Babylon must also be rebuilt to fulfill biblical prophecy. Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein has already begun the latter project.

Paradoxically, as Chicago Tribune columnist Michael Hirsley recently noted, "those places have to exist in order that they can be destroyed" to fulfill prophecy.

'Just another terrorist'

At least one well-known fundamentalist does not believe the gulf war is necessarily tied to Bible prophecy.

"I do believe in the imminency of Christ's return, but I do not believe that this event, the war in Iraq, is necessarily a piece of that puzzle," the Rev. Jerry Falwell said recently.

"I think Hussein is just one more Qaddafi, one more Arafat, one more terrorist who is going to get his bell rung."

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Israeli child munches Passover matza

JERUSALEM—Amir, 4, tastes the Passover matza at a model seder held at a day care center in Jerusalem. For the ceremonial evening meals on the first and second night of Passover, the unleavened bread is served along with special dishes which symbolize the hardships of the Israelites as they fled bondage in Egypt.

Health-care providers seek basic-medicine fund

Religious News Service

WASHINGTON—In a church-funded clinic in rural Alabama, Sister Roseanne Cook provides what for many Americans has become a rare commodity—basic health care.

"We have people dying of things that they shouldn't be dying of, all the time," said Sister Cook, a physician and nun who runs the Pineapple Rural Clinic in Pineapple, Ala.

She was among 15 leaders and practitioners of Catholic health care who gathered for three days in a retreat house on the outskirts of Washington to develop a policy statement on health care for low- and moderate-income people.

Basis for lobbying

The statement, which points to "the violent and devastating effects" of the current health-care system in the United States, will be used by church activists as a basis for lobbying in the capital.

Increased spending on advanced medical treatment for people in the late stages of life, while many others go without routine health care, was cited as one of the more serious problems.

Participants said it doesn't make sense to invest more and more resources in esoteric technologies when people are really most in need of basic care.

The health care leaders were brought together by Network, a national Catholic social action organization led by nuns and laywomen. The organization is widely considered one of the most active church lobbies in Washington, with particularly close ties to liberal Catholic legislators such as Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Mary Rose Oakar (D-Ohio.)

Ms. Oakar, paying a visit to the group, cited official estimates that 37 million people have no health insurance and another 40 million have little insurance coverage.

Calling for comprehensive national health insurance, Ms. Oakar said: "I'm convinced that the American people want this—that they want this as much as they want to protect the oil fields abroad. This is a national security issue."

4-page statement issued

The congresswoman's sentiments were echoed in the four-page statement, "A Just U.S. Policy for Access to Health Care," issued at the end of the meeting.

"As health care practitioners and concerned citizens, we are deeply distressed by the lack of available health care for all people in a country as wealthy as the United States," says the statement, immediately adopted by Network.

"Daily, we encounter the violent and devastating effects of the lack of a national health care policy—a failure which leaves the most vulnerable people unprotected and which jeopardizes our nation's future."

The statement also calls for "changes in national priorities which would shift funding from military spending to programs to enhance the quality of life for all people."

Review

Book tackles 'problem of salvation'

"God Does Not Foreclose" by David Lowes Watson, Nashville, Tennessee; Abingdon Press, 1990. 160 pages. $12.95

By WILL PIGOT

This book will widen your knowledge, stimulate your thinking, encourage your faith, maybe even inspire your zeal.

It is a careful, penetrating gospel theology.

To be sure, you may have to consult your dictionary now and then. You may need to reread a paragraph here and there to delve into its full meaning.

Not cliche ridden

It is not the typical cliché-ridden text reduced to the limited vocabulary of television, which insults our intelligence. This one can stretch our minds with its brilliant but smoothly prosed exposition.

David Lowes Watson's book tackles the central theological problem of our salvation. It does so in a way that may challenge an easy-going sentimental idea of indulgent forgiveness.

It is about universal grace that is not without the unavoidable judgment of righteousness or the agony of the cross.

It does not bypass God's condemnation of iniquity nor the punishment of evildoers. At the same time it does not minimize to human measure the massive persistence of God's love.

It grapples with the meaning of justice, at once God's law and God's grace. It grasps at the full significance of divine love, not a permissive affection but an unbounded compassion that will not let anyone escape forever the love for which and by which they were created.

Waiting for the prodigal

The father suffers, weeps, waits, longs for and will not give up the return of the prodigal.

Dr. Watson supports his statements with the exegesis of many Scripture passages, together with references to Biblical interpreters and theologians through the centuries of church history.

The author's thesis is that it is God's will for all human creatures to be with him in "the coming reign of God but that the church, self-centered, has been blocking God's will."

His concern is "the misappropriation of God's grace as a particular benefit for Christians." Instead of being "channels of grace, congregations have come to be viewed as Christic health spas . . . to soothe earthly discomforts and heighten . . . spiritual well-being.

" . . . it assumes a proprietary role" and becomes "jealous of a privileged status it was never meant to enjoy."

He reminds the reader that "election is not for privilege but for purpose." We have become "a church that claims to have good news but does not find it particularly newsworthy."

The church in North America is described as "encultured and anthropo-centered." It "has tried to have God's grace for itself only and has thus blocked the gospel of grace for all humanity."

Here is a book that does not prescribe the parameters of God's action and attitude toward the human individual from human perspective. It looks rather at a man in all his relationships as from the divine view.

It does not confine God, in his relation to man, to a creedal dogma but apprehends the power of infinitely, eternally, dominating love.

Anyone who skims this book may miss some of the fine logic of the author's thought. Not everyone who reads it thoroughly may agree with its every statement. Yet withal, it pricks the conscience of discipleship, is an urgent call to mission, and an invitation to praise.

David Lowes Watson
". . . election is not for privilege . . ."

Mr. Pigot is a frequent reviewer for the Reporter.

What does a poor parish do with many worldly assets?

Religious News Service

ATLANTA—Congregations with extraordinary worldly assets have a special responsibility in their communities and in the wider church and world, according to Episcopal leaders who met recently in Atlanta.

The loose network known as the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes held its sixth annual conference at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, which is viewed as a model for urban ministry.

The group embraces 36 parishes which have cash endowments or income-producing property worth at least $1 million each.

St. Luke's, a 126-year-old parish a few blocks north of downtown Atlanta, showcased various social outreach ministries such as its community soup kitchen, a street academy, Hispanic ministries and an economic development corporation.

In an interview, the Rev. James Lemler, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Indianapolis and consortium president, said the group may sometimes be jokingly referred to as a club of "fat cat parishes" but members consider themselves part of a "stewardship and mission organization."

It is believed that the Episcopal Church's 7,000 congregations include more than 400 parishes which meet the group's definition as "endowed," he said.

Those include Trinity Church Wall Street, whose multi-million-dollar endowment Father Lemler quipped is considered "the mother lode of us all." But he noted that only a bit more than 5 percent of his denomination's congregations are flush with cash endowments, in contrast to the stereotype Episcopal parish as well-heeled.

Three Indianapolis parishes—Trinity, St. Paul's and Christ Church Cathedral —each came into multi-millions of dollars in the early 1980s from the estate of the late pharmaceutical tycoon Eli Lilly.

Dear Deborah

My mother cries all the time. What shall I do?

Dear Deborah:

My father got called up to Saudi Arabia. It is really hard for us kids.

I am 10, and there are three younger than me. We do not have a lot of money, and my mother cries all the time. She won't even go to the store anymore. I walk over there but I cannot carry enough for all of us to eat.

Please tell me what to do.

Thanks.

Jimm

Dear Jimm:

You are as brave as your father, working to keep your family together.

Your family needs help and so does your mother. Please talk to an adult who can help you find what you need. Can you talk to your pastor? Or maybe there is someone at school you can ask to help you. I am sure there are people in your town who can help your family with your basic needs.

Just as important is to get some counseling for your mother. She apparently feels she cannot cope alone.

Well, she is not alone. There are people who will help her; the trick is to find them. You need an adult to help you do that.

Do continue to look after the little ones. God bless you as you care for your mother and your family.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

'Take the name of Jesus' inspired by discussion

Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe;
It will joy and comfort give you,
Take it then where'er you go.
Precious name, O how sweet!
Hope of earth and joy of heav'n.

BY WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Born in Petersburg, N. Y., Lydia Baxter became a Christian through the influence of a Baptist missionary.

Not long after her conversion, Lydia and her sister were largely responsible for establishing a Baptist church in her hometown.

After her marriage, Mrs. Baxter and her husband moved to New York City, where she zealously carried on her Christian activity.

Although she became an invalid and was confined to her bed much of the time, her home was a gathering place for ministers and Christian workers.

Mrs. Baxter's conversation with friends frequently involved portions of Scripture.

One such conversation centered around the name of Jesus, and Colossians 3:17 was mentioned: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

The discussion provided the immediate inspiration for the hymn "Take the name of Jesus with you," which Lydia Baxter wrote in 1870.

Soon afterwards, William H. Doane wrote the musical setting that we sing with this text.

Having been translated into many languages, the hymn is sung around the world.

One day in a Salvation Army leper colony in Indonesia, a patient with a beautiful voice sang the hymn in a gathering of patients in the ward.

He sang the hymn with great meaning, then told of his joy in being a Christian. He concluded by saying he was glad he had become a leper, for he would never have heard the name of Jesus in his own village.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed"

EASTER RELIVED

It's possible to sit in a pew
and feel you're on a walk with
the risen Lord. The prayers,
singing, and joy of seeing
yellow stamen of the lilies
glowing with the news: He lives;
each is a part of an Easter walk.
The Scripture sums it up for us,
and we ask ourselves,
"Didn't love for Jesus make
our hearts burn within us?"

—JEAN RASMUSSEN

United Methodist Youth of Louisiana

YOUTH SERVICE FUND SUNDAY — APRIL 28

Youth Service Fund for 1991

Youth and adult delegates to the 1989 NYMO Convocation and Legislative Assembly voted to set some long term goals for the Youth Service Fund. We are asked to Double YSF by '92.

In order to accomplish this goal the Louisiana Annual Conference Youth need to raise $7,510 for 1990, $9,385 for 1991 and $11,262, for 1992.

We not only made our goal but exceeded our goal for 1990. We raised $9,560.37. Thanks for a job well done!

We would like to make these suggestions in order to achieve our ultimate goal in 1991.

Plan a "double" party for your UMYF, district or conference event! Double dip, double up, double over! Get creative! Double the fun!

You are the ones that will make a difference! Now is the time to start! The Youth Service Fund is your Mission Project.

Youth Service Fund Contributions 1990 Total: $9,560.37

Acadiana	**$ 238.25**
First Franklin	75.00
Mt. Vernon, Thibodaux	15.00
Asbury, Lafayette	50.00
First, Lafayette	40.00
Louisiana Memorial, Opelousas	50.00
Magnolia, Thibodaux	8.25
Alexandria	**$1,243.11**
DCYM	**146.00**
First, Alexandria	404.06
First, Boyce	10.00
Nolley Memorial, Jena	299.80
Asbury, Natchitoches	12.00
William Chapel, Natchitoches	1.00
First, Pineville	237.00
St. Marks, Pineville	20.00
First, Winfield	113.25
Baton Rouge	**$2,430.09**
DCYM	**946.06**
First, Baker	197.57
Blackwater, Baker	143.00
Broadmoor, Baton Rouge	50.00
Francis Asbury, Baton Rouge	122.00
Jefferson, Baton Rouge	425.00
Jordan, Baton Rouge	120.00
St. Mark, Baton Rouge	100.00
Wesley, Baton Rouge	50.00
Beech Grove, Baton Rouge	2.00
Mt. Zion, Clinton	15.00
Gonzales UMC, Gonzales	83.46
Meadows Chapel, Gonzales	23.00
St. Francisville, Zachary	25.00
Slaughter	5.00
Bluff Creek, Slaughter	2.00
Evangeline, Baton Rouge	20.00
Genesis, Baton Rouge	1.00
First, Baton Rouge	50.00
Special Donation	50.00
Lake Charles	**$ 831.95**
Church Point	2.00
Ville Platte, Church Point	1.00
First, Crowley	139.20
First, DeQuincy	15.00
Eunice	38.20
Iota, Eunice	100.00
AA Bernard Memorial/ Hayes, Iowa	10.00
First, Lake Charles	101.85
University, Lake Charles	171.70
Warren, Lake Charles	66.00
First, Leesville	22.00
Holly Grove, Leesville	10.00
Oakdale	30.00
Pine Prairie, Oakdale	5.00
Roanoke	10.00
Wesley, Roanoke	10.00
Henning Memorial, Sulphur	100.00
Monroe	**$ 643.46**
DCYM	**148.00**
First, Bastrop	95.46
First, Lake Providence	75.00
First, Monroe	85.00
St. Paul's, Monroe	100.00
First, West Monroe	15.00
McGuire, West Monroe	125.00
New Orleans	**$ 592.40**
St. James, Marrero	25.00
First, Gretna	126.25
Lutcher, New Orleans	10.00
St. Landry, New Orleans	2.00
Munholland, Metairie	100.00
St. Matthews, Metairie	10.00
Bethany, New Orleans	114.15
First, New Orleans	25.00
Felicity, New Orleans	5.00
Haven, New Orleans	20.00
Lake Vista, New Orleans	25.00
Mt. Zion, New Orleans	50.00
Peoples, New Orleans	50.00
Phillips, New Orleans	20.00
St. Luke's New Orleans	5.00
Spanish Ministries	5.00
North Shore	**$ 520.49**
First, Denham Springs	75.00
Roberts, Denham Springs	28.87
First, Hammond	157.00
Kentwood	5.75
Hartzell, Mt. Zion, Slidell	25.00
Walker	228.87
Ruston	**$ 66.01**
Doyline	5.00
Sibley, Doyline	5.00
Dubach	10.00
Grace, Ruston	5.00
Wesley Chapel, Ruston	7.00
Methodist Children's Home	34.01
Shreveport	**$ 617.10**
First, Bossier City	261.60
Asbury, Bossier City	50.00
Crossroads, Coushatta	6.00
Bethel, Logansport	5.00
Wesley, Mansfield	101.00
Pleasant Hill	5.00
Mitchell, Pleasant Hill	3.00
Pelican, Pleasant Hill	5.00
Converse, Zwolle	5.00
St. James, Shreveport	108.50
St. Paul, Shreveport	67.00
Special Donations in general	**$2,377.51**

This day has been set aside by the Louisiana Annual Conference so youth can share the meaning of Youth Service Fund with their church congregations.

Youth Service Fund

I. **History/Philosophy**
Youth Service Fund (YSF) is money "raised by youth, distributed by youth, to projects which benefit youth."
— it is an attempt to help youth "Reach out to service beyond the local church" and make an impact upon projects.
— together we can do things we could not do individually

II. **Process**
A. Money is raised at the local church or district level
B. Money is sent to the Louisiana Annual Conference
C. 30% of money is sent to National Youth Ministry Organization (committee of youth and adults determine how money will be distributed)
D. 70% of money stays in the Louisiana Conference
1. up to 30% of money may be used for administration
2. at least 30% of money is distributed to projects in conference
3. at least 30% of money is distributed to projects outside the conference

III. **Resources & Ideas For YSF Sunday**
A. Share The Dream: YSF Manual — order from Discipleship
B. Youth Service Fund: Share the Dream Brochure — order from Discipleship
C. Skits — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office
D. Songs — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office
E. "The Wizard of YSF" — Play — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office
F. "Parable of the Prodigal Youth Group" — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office
G. "The Life and Loves of a Coke Machine" — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office.
H. "Parable For YSF" — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office
I. Fundraising Ideas — request from Louisiana Annual Conference office

Youth Service Fund Recognition

If you would like to honor someone in a special way why not consider giving a gift for the mission for the church in the form of "A Youth Service Fund Recognition." Send your contribution of $20 or more to Carolyn Dove, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Please make your check payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference. A certificate of recognition will be sent to the honoree. Example below:

A YOUTH SERVICE FUND RECOGNITION

has been awarded to

by Conference Council on Youth Ministries

A gift for the mission of the church has been forwarded to

The Louisiana Annual Conference
Youth Ministries, The United Methodist Church

Youth Service Fund Committee _____ Date _____

Youth Service Fund Committee _____ Youth Service Fund Committee _____

1991 Youth Service Fund Projects

In Conference

ISTROUMA METROPOLITAN METHODIST MISSION CENTER: Baton Rouge
The goal of the Istrouma Metropolitan Methodist Mission Center is to focus district mission and ministry in a particular area of the city which experiences tremendous deprivation. YSF funds will be designated for mission operating expenses and for the expansion of the after school program to provide for additional recreational activities for community children and youth.

CORNERSTONE KIDS: New Orleans
This program will offer children and youth a safe ground to meet on, alternatives to gang activities, drugs and racial violence, as well as basic Christian education, and education in basic value systems. The programs will be approached in a creative non-threatening and non-traditional way.

Out of Conference

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT: First UMC, DeRidder
The Appalachia Service Project offers a unique experience in Christian Ministry. ASP is a service experience designed for youth to come and to work. The primary focus is the ministry to and with families whose homes are repaired.

MOUNTAIN TOP: Jefferson UMC, Baton Rouge
The goals of Mountain Top are to help meet the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social needs of Cumberland Mountain families and children. To actively encourage the Christian growth of the Junior and Senior High youth that participate. To develop and facilitate the leadership skills of the participants. To foster within the communities we work in an eagerness for them to minister to themselves.

HARVEST OF HOPE: Virginia
The Society of St. Andrew has a program for senior high age youth to train them to work on the problem of hunger through gleaning fields after harvest. That food is then delivered to food banks, soup kitchens, emergency shelter, etc. to help provide nutritious meals for people who frequently experience dangerous levels of hunger.

CONFRONTATION POINT MINISTRIES: Tennessee
The purpose of Confrontation Point Ministries missions program is to provide quality, outdoor, experiential, Christian camp experiences for persons who normally do not have such opportunities for church youth groups to have a direct mission experience through serving others.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT: Tennessee
The Appalachia Service Project intentionally seeks to serve the poor in rural areas where home repair services are unavailable. The program is designed for youth. Because the Project is based on sharing God's love through the tangible physical labor of repairing homes to make them warmer, safer and drier, no barriers of worship style or church politics can interfere with the mission of the project.

1991 NYMO Youth Service Fund Projects

The United Methodist National Youth Ministry Organization (NYMO) is sponsoring 18 youth ministry projects around the world. Two are Louisiana projects.

$80,000 made available through the national portion of the Youth Service Fund, will enable ministries of discipleship, evangelism, peace, justice and outreach.

Angel Care Respite Program
Alexandria, Louisiana
$3,000

Volunteer youth are trained to offer personal care and friendship to disabled youth for a weekend experience.

Clanton Chapel UMC Growth Project
Dulac, Louisiana
$5,325

Spiritual development, leadership development and evangelism are the keys to unlocking any future for this community of Houma Indians.

YOUTH ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN A WORLD THAT IS OFTEN UNJUST, LONELY, CONFUSED, HUNGRY AND COLD

Youth Service Fund

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LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace — Witness for Jesus Christ
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Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Well Done!

In a once-in-a-lifetime experience, over 10,000 Louisiana United Methodists filled the Centroplex last Saturday and their voices of praise reached the throne of God. The Gathering exceeded all hopes and expectations.

Truly, the river became a place "where bright angels feet have trod."

There are so many people to thank for so much work. Without the help of the pastors, the Vision 2000 Committee, the banner makers, the publicists, and drivers in every local church, it could not have happened.

Without the carpenters, painters, ushers, and all who participated in the service, it could not have happened.

Without the hard work of the Conference staff, it could not have happened.

Without the great preaching of Bishop Wilke and Dr. Holmes, it could not have happened.

Without the work of the Steering Committee, the Worship Committee, the Arrangements Committee, the Transportation Committee, and the Publicity Committee, it could not have happened.

Without the leadership of the musical directors, accompanists, instrumentalists, soloists, special groups and choirs (both youth and adults), it could not have happened.

Without the artists and liturgical dancers, it could not have happened.

Without the tradition and beautiful craftsmanship of Kirby Verret and the Houma Indians, it could not have happened.

Without the coordination of Chuck Simmons, Esther Socolofsky, and Don Cottrill, it could not have happened.

There is a point when you know that you have not thanked everyone who should be thanked. At that point you simply say "Thank you Lord" because the hand of God was upon everyone connected with The Gathering.

William B. Oden

Don Saliers to Lead Workshop

'Let the Amen Sound from the People Again!'

Exciting and meaningful worship is a key factor in the development of vital congregations. Our life together in Jesus Christ is centered in our worship. To assist pastors, musicians, and worship chairpersons in planning more creative, motivating worship services, the Board of Discipleship Worship Committee will offer a special worship workshop April 12-13, 1991, at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria.

Dr. Don E. Saliers

Dr. Melva Costen

The workshop is appropriately entitled "Let the Amen Sound from the People Again." It will be led by Dr. Don E. Saliers, Professor of Worship at Candler School of Theology of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and Dr. Melva Costen, Professor of Worship and Music at the Interdenominational Theological Center, also in Atlanta.

Dr. Saliers is an ordained United Methodist elder who has taught courses in theology and worship at Candler since 1974. He has presented numerous United Methodist worship resources, including his books **From Ashes to Fire** and **From Hope to Joy**, and has led worship workshops in conferences across the country. He is one of the authors of **A Handbook of the Christian Year**.

Dr. Costen's expertise is in the areas of church and choral music, hymnody, African and African-American music, liturgy and drama. She is an ordained elder in the Presbyterian church, and has written two books, **A Workshop Manual for Christian Worship** and **The Black Christian Worship Experience**.

The fee to attend this workshop is $30, which includes the cost of lunch on Saturday. All persons active in the planning of worship are encouraged to attend. The workshop will begin at 3:30 on Friday, April 12 and end on Saturday at 3:00 p.m.

In this month's coordinated mailing packet is a flyer for this event. A preregistration form is included on the flyer. For additional flyers and further information, you may contact Worship Committee Chairperson, the Reverend Frank Poole at 504-383-4777, or the Reverend Karen Davis, 504-346-1646.

Local D.S., Preacher to Assist in Leading Seminar

The Reverend C. Richard Hoffpauir, Alexandria District Superintendent, and the Reverend Jarrell Morgan of Keithville, have been chosen as two of the leaders for the upcoming seminar, "Celebrate and Witness in Cross Racial Ministry" April 26-27, 1991, in Dallas, Texas. The office of the South Central Jurisdiction recently announced this theme for the second annual Jurisdictional consultation on cross racial ministry.

The event will provide a forum in which persons who are in or will soon be in cross racial appointments can share their stories, explore the psychological, social, relational, and spiritual impact, and receive affirmation of their ministry as a valid means of celebrating God's grace and witnessing for Jesus Christ.

The number of persons appointed to cross racial ministry is increasing each year. These appointments are not only a time of trauma and crises for the minister and his/her family, but for the local congregation as well. The convocation will seek to address these issues as well as provide emotional and spiritual support to persons who are already in cross racial appointments.

The two-day event is not only for pastors, but District Superintendents, Annual Conference staff persons, spouses of ministers, pastor/parish relations committee chairpersons, and diaconal ministers who are in or will soon be in cross racial ministry.

Other leaders include the Reverend Julian Miguel, pastor, First UMC, Sidney, New England; Ms. Janet Custer, administrative board chair, Port Lavaca, Texas; the Reverend Richardo Jones, pastor, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Mrs. Sallie Frederick, pastor's spouse, Port Lavaca; and the Reverend Joseph Harris, district superintendent, Ardmore, Oklahoma. The Reverend Austin Frederick, pastor, Port Lavacca, is the director of the convocation.

Persons desiring brochures or additional information should contact the office of the South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75228, (214) 321-7077.

DISCIPLE Scholarships Still Available

Assistance is still being offered to churches wanting to participate in DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY. A training seminar will be held in Dallas, Texas, July 11-13, 1991.

The cost for one person to attend the seminar is $600, which covers room and board, video tapes, and materials to teach a group of 12 persons. Travel expenses are additional.

Churches who need this assistance may request in writing a $200 scholarship through the Conference Council on Ministries, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720.

Registration for the training event is handled by Cokesbury Seminars, 1-800-672-1789. If your church is already enrolled in the DISCIPLE program, you may attend this seminar for $200, which pays for room and board, and materials for one person.

Funding for the scholarships has been provided by the United Methodist Foundation, the Conference Council on Ministries, and the Conference Board of Discipleship. Meaningful Bible study is a Vision 2000 priority for the current year. An excellent answer to this need expressed by our churches is the DISCIPLE Bible Study.

For further information about DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY, call Cokesbury Seminars or the Reverend Karen Davis, 504-346-1646.

TO ALL LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE INSURANCE SUBSCRIBERS

This is to notify you that all medical and dental invoices incurred during 1990 must be sent in to the insurance company no later than March 31, 1991 in order to be eligible for the benefits. The invoices should be mailed to the following address:

Employee Benefit Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 51005
Shreveport, LA 71135-1005

Area Church 'Getting Involved'

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church in Metairie, is among many area churches declaring themselves sponsors in support of the Ulster Project with prayers, services and funds.

The purpose of the Ulster Project is to foster tolerance, understanding and friendship between Catholic and Protestant teenagers from Northern Ireland. Approximately sixteen Irish teenagers, half of whom are Catholic and half Protestant, come to America for one month each summer to live in private homes, accompanied by two adult counselors/chaperones.

During the project, the entire group of Irish and American youth meet several times a week for encounter sessions and social activities at the various churches involved in the project. This program has been conducted successfully at other areas of Louisiana in the past.

Jerry Gast, Ecumenical Work Area Chairperson, is the coordinator of the project for St. Matthew's.

In addition to its work with the Ulster Project, St. Matthew's has joined with Parkview Baptist Church and Parkway Presbyterian Church to adopt Airline Park Elementary School which is located in their neighborhood. The plan consists of financial assistance, as well as personal involvement with the school when needed, such as in classrooms and on field trips. Mr. Gast also serves as the coordinator for this successful and important program.

Merit Scholarship Program Available

United Methodist Merit
Scholarship Program for 1991-1992
Louisiana Annual Conference
Board of Higher Education
and Campus Ministry

Two scholarships in the amount of $700 each will be awarded. Please send the following application to nominate a student from your church, along with:

1. A detailed letter of nomination and recommendation from the pastor and/or your chairperson of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

2. A detailed description of the student's **active involvement** in the following areas (these will be some of the criteria used for selection): **Academic excellence, involvement in Church, School; Civic and Community activities; other organizations; and the reasons the nominee merits this special recognition.**

3. A detailed statement from the student, clearly outlining her/his career goals and financial needs as they are currently perceived. Give the student's accurate Grade Point Average.

The deadline for receiving all nominations and supporting letters and documentation is April 15, 1991. For further information or questions, contact the Selection Committee chairperson, the Reverend Debbie Drash. Return completed nomination forms to the Merit Scholarship c/o: Rev. Drash, Chaplain, Capitol Hospice, 1680 O'Neal Lane, #382, Baton Rouge, LA 70816, (504) 272-9558; the Reverend Larry Miller, Grace UMC, P.O. Box 1241, Ruston, LA 71273-1241, (318) 255-2211; or Dr. Alfred Norris, President, Gammon Theological, 653 Beckwith St., S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314, (404) 527-7770.

Pre-Retirement Seminar
for
Clergy 55 years and older

April 16-17
Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center
Registration materials available at the Louisiana Conference office (504) 346-1646.
Registration deadline: April 1, 1991 — Limited space available

Topics:
Pension Program
Housing Concerns
Investments
Adjusting to Retirement
Social Security
Health Insurance

Good Samaritan Ministries
Special page on page 6

United Methodist Men

Centenary College to Host Jurisdictional Meeting

Louisiana Area Bishop William B. Oden will be one of the leaders during the United Methodist Men's South Central Jurisdiction's Quadrennial Congress to be held June 28-30, 1991, at Centenary College in Shreveport. The theme of the Congress is "United Methodist Men — United Methodist Church: Partners."

The purpose of the three-day event is to revitalize the evangelistic, missional, and spiritual life of the men and to send them forth as faithful disciples into the world.

Other leaders who will appear on the program include Dr. Donald Webb, president of Centenary; Dr. Mouzon Biggs Jr., pastor, Boston Avenue UMC, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Dr. Zan Holmes, pastor, St. Luke Community UMC, Dallas, Texas; Dr. Tom Matheny, president, Judicial Council and president, Conference Board of Trustees, Hammond; the Reverend Tom Roughface, Superintendent, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Bishop Richard Wilke, Little Rock, Arkansas.

The event will feature worship, singing, preaching, special music, and other activities including a Cajun meal and a Cajun band. Wives of the participants are also invited to attend. Several special activities have been planned for the women. "Spiritual Movements" will be presented by Mr. Roughface. A special feature will be a presentation by the "Save the Youth Choir." The Upper Room Prayer Line will be manned from 7 p.m. on Friday until 5 p.m. on Saturday.

Information and registration information has been sent to all local UMM presidents, and district and Annual Conference presidents, and may be obtained from the South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75228; (214) 321-7077.

Charles Dick of Kansas City, Missouri, is the Jurisdictional president and chairman of the planning committee. Boyd Baun is UMM president, Louisiana Conference.

Registration

United Methodist Men's Congress
June 28-30, 1991
Shreveport, LA

Mail Registration and Check To:
Centenary College,
Office Church Relations
P.O. Box 41188
Shreveport, LA 71134-1188

Checks payable — Centenary College, UMM Congress
(To Be Confirmed Must Be Received By May 23, 1991)

LAST NAME _____ FIRST _____
HOME ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
ROOMMATE (Send Registrations Together) _____

ARRIVAL —
No Refunds After June 1, 1991
Registrations May Be Transferred
Late Registration after May 23 — ADD $10.00 —
For Office Use

Type Registration — Send Check With Registration

☐ FULL TIME ON CAMPUS — Meals & Housing, Registration — $90.00 (Men Only)
☐ FULL TIME — COMMUTER — Registration & Meals — No Housing — $65.00 (Men Only)
☐ FULL TIME (MEN) — Registration — Meals — $65.00 (Make Own Hotel Arrangements)
☐ FULL TIME (WOMEN) — Reception, Bus Tour, Cajun Feast Sunday — $65.00 (Make Own Hotel Arrangements)
☐ SATURDAY ONLY (MEN) — $40.00

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

Is it OK to 'walk out' to express dissent?

Should Christians ever "take their marbles and go home"—that is, disassociate from other Christians—as a way to dissent from the views and/or actions of the majority?

Two recent incidents involving groups in the United Methodist Church give that question immediacy:

■ A retired bishop asked that his name be removed from the official report of the denomination's worship book study committee and said that he will not attend the committee's next meeting. He protested that the proposed new worship book does not uphold the primacy of Scripture.

■ A member of a churchwide study committee on homosexuality resigned after a preliminary "straw poll" by the committee showed a preference for recommending changes in the denomination's statement on homosexuality. He said that he opposed weakening the church's stance and that he cannot in good conscience continue to serve on the committee.

The reasons offered for such drastic steps are rooted in deeply held, albeit contested, interpretations of Christian principles.

We question, however, whether cutting ties with other Christians is the most appropriate or most effective way of dealing with the vast majority of disagreements about matters of faith and practice.

Disagreements among Christians struggling to discern the mind of Christ seem inevitable. Differences should not be accentuated, but their open, respectful acknowledgment can even result at times in a healthy form of tension.

"Walking out," rather than continuing to contend with each other, removes any possibility of achieving the biblical vision of oneness in Christ (John 17:11).

So even in the midst of deep conflict, we should strive to deal with each other in a spirit of respect, humility, and awareness that we all stand under God's judgment and we all are saved by God's grace.

That spirit of unity is not rooted in our agreement on all issues but in our shared allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

A higher standard for Christians

Both our theology and common sense counsel against breaking relationship with other Christians as a way of expressing disagreement (see preceding editorial).

✓ **"Walking out" sets a dangerous example, particularly when those who "walk" are church leaders.** Their actions convey the message, however unintended, that breaking relationship is an appropriate way for Christians to deal with differing opinions.

Not so. "Walking out" compounds the conflict. Moreover, breaking ties with those with whom we disagree is contrary to our Lord's example: tenaciously staying in relationship, even with His enemies. So should we.

✓ **Disassociating oneself from those with whom one disagrees mutes or denies "voice" to those who share one's viewpoints.** This is particularly true when one has been selected to represent such viewpoints.

In such cases, the most responsible position usually is to stay in place and continue expressing one's convictions—contending for change while recognizing oneself to be in a minority position. Such a position may be uncomfortable, but it honors God.

✓ **Breaking off ties with brother and sister Christians undermines the spiritual integrity and witness of the Body of Christ.** Doing so gives fuel to skeptics who question how we Christians credibly can call others to peace and harmony yet continue to behave divisively among ourselves.

By contrast, the biblical vision of spiritual unity and interdependence within the Body of Christ witnesses to a higher standard for Christians who disagree with each other:

"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you' " (1 Corinthians 12:21f.).

Protesters at the recent World Council of Churches meeting urge Christians to cut ties with other Christians. We question whether breaking relationship is an appropriate way to express differences with other Christians.

FaithLine

Do you agree with this week's editorials that Christians should not "walk out" on other Christians as a way to express dissent? Why or why not? Tell us your views by calling the Reporter's FaithLine answering machine and leaving a 45-second (maximum length) recorded message.

Call (214) 630-6499 no later than midnight, March 19.

My Witness

Looking for hand of God amid Ireland's 'troubles'

By GREGORY VAN DUSSEN

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Gregory Van Dussen is pastor of First United Methodist Church in Albion, N.Y. (Western New York Annual Conference).

The water off the Antrim coast of Ireland was unbelievably clear. Sea birds made their way to and from niches along black cliffs and tourists paused for one more photo of Dunluce Castle.

I recalled earlier visits to Ireland when media-hyped fears had kept me and my family, like many others, away from these six northern counties.

To most Americans, Northern Ireland conjures images of hooded gunmen, maimed bodies, unending civil war. There is so much more.

There is the same natural beauty that captivates visitors to the rest of Ireland. There's a hospitality that transforms chance encounters into real friendships.

There are monuments to the faith of generations past, such as the abbey and round tower on Devenish Island.

True, there also are old, intractable problems in the north of Ireland, but also genuine, even heroic efforts to achieve understanding, justice, and reconciliation.

"The Troubles," as the conflict is commonly referred to, can certainly be seen in military checkpoints, heavily guarded "control zones," and police barracks bristling with barbed wire.

Radical division at the base

At the base of the conflict is a radical division over which nation and culture people belong to: British and colonial, or Irish, linked with the Irish Republic.

This distinction is far more to the point than the usual Protestant/Catholic labels. In some communities grafliti naming the I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army, nationalist paramilitaries) or the U.V.F. (Ulster Volunteer Force, unionist paramilitaries) indicate just how far some are willing to carry their political views.

For example, an I.R.A. bomb killed four people in County Armagh just hours before we drove into that county. The violence is real. But it is not the whole story.

Many try to stay clear of "The Troubles" by "passing no remarks," that is, refraining from political comment or confrontation.

Others pursue reconciliation

Others, especially in the churches, actively pursue reconciliation and a new future.

While many clergy and laity, Methodists among them, belong to sectarian organizations such as the Orange Lodge, others have taken bold steps toward peace and constructive interaction.

The Rev. Eric Gallagher, superintendent of the Belfast Central Mission for many years, once joined other church leaders in secret talks with the I.R.A., seeking a ceasefire.

He did so at the risk of losing his life or his pastorate to the wrath of militant loyalists. Yet when a police raid ended the secrecy of the talks, his people supported him.

Dr. Gallagher, who has been president of Irish Methodism and a major ecumenical figure, has devoted much of his life to the healing of his society through prophetic witness and constructive programming.

Traveler's fears confirmed

Not long ago, an Australian traveler almost overcame his fear of Northern Ireland long enough to see the place for himself. He mustered the courage to fly the great distance to Belfast and to find a guest house.

That night the television news gave graphic coverage to a terrorist incident that confirmed his worst fears. He was so terrified that he returned immediately to Australia with his tale of horror, never having seen the real Northern Ireland.

'The Troubles' are real

"The Troubles" are, of course, real and there have been far too many lives destroyed and communities mauled. Recent bombings in London have reminded us all that the war is far from over. But there is much more to be seen, heard, and felt before our understanding is fair or complete.

Most of all, there is the incredible beauty of the land, which every day seems to spring fresh from the hand of God. There also is the unconquerable beauty of people who are learning to love and grow and seek a new future that will allow a redeemed beauty to outshine the corrosion of bigotry, fear, injustice and death.

Letters to the Editor

'Peace at any price' approach ignores victims

I was surprised to find that all the Feb. 22 letters to the editor were opposed to intervention in the Gulf.

The logic of these writers reminded me of an incident in New York in which a large number of people saw a woman being murdered over a lengthy period of time and did nothing to intervene. This "peace at any price" approach has sympathy for the aggressor but ignores the victim.

Now that Kuwait has been liberated, the difference between aggressor and victim should be more clear. Jesus did not hesitate to defend the woman who was about to be stoned to death and neither should we.

Jack H. Ott
Hilo, Hawaii

Saddened, not surprised

Speaking of being saddened but not surprised by letters in the March 1 issue, there are always two passages of Scripture studiously ignored by those who choose to bash their favorite sinners:

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 2:23), and "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

Note the use of the word "all." The Bible does not say "all but homosexuals," or "all but (fill in your favorite sin here)." If we are all the children of God and all sinners as well, how can we exclude anyone from the church?

Bob Thurman
Richardson, Texas

We won't stay

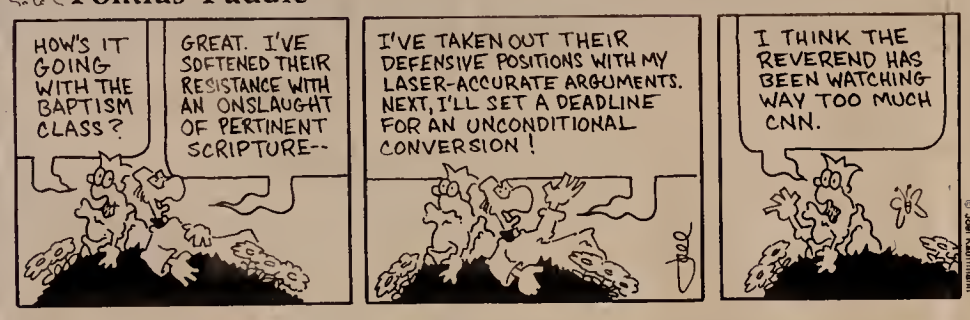
The membership of the United Methodist Church is now below 9,000,000. It has been declining ever since the church began to become socially oriented rather than Bible preaching and hymn singing.

I predict the word "United" will disappear as soon as the church admits homosexuals to membership and ordains some. My wife and I will not remain as members of the United Methodist church if this happens. This contradicts the Bible's teachings.

R. G. Sloane
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"Faith, courage and imagination cannot merely rise above circumstances, they can change the whole direction of events."

—United Methodist Bishop Ernest T. Dixon Jr., San Antonio Area

Faithfully yours

Are we ignoring 'beautiful swans' in our midst?

"What did you say, Geechee-girl?"

Have you ever remained silent while someone was being called an "ugly duckling," only to feel just as guilty when the person turned out to be a beautiful swan?

Denise Stovall

I had such an experience during the recent meeting of our church's religion and race agency in Charleston, S.C.

The experience made me recall my college days in Atlanta nearly 15 years ago, when I had a sorority sister from Charleston named Rose.

During the time she was pledging the sorority, its members would make fun of everything about her—her dark skin-tone, her African features, her favorite foods—and especially the way she talked.

My sorority sisters used to say—always in a negative way—that Rose "talked that Geechee talk."

That's a slang reference to descendants of West African slaves brought to Charles Towne during the 1600s in an area that later became part of South Carolina.

But last week, I learned that Rose and others with "that Geechee talk" may hold the distinction of being "part of one of the only African American groups that have really retained their heritage."

Their relatives were not backward, nor did they have tongues "too large to speak properly." They had a special accent and phrased their sentences in a language, called "Gullah," that had been passed down to black families for centuries.

During last week's meeting, commission member Elaine Jenkins of John's Island, S.C., showed a public broadcasting video on the Gullah people in South Carolina indicating how this culture was almost identical to that of the West African people of Sierra Leone.

I watched with envy as the video showed how Sierra Leone's president talked just like the Gullah did, described the same foods the Gullah ate, and even sang black church songs exactly the way the Gullah did!

Ms. Jenkins and other descendants of the Gullah people have been to Sierra Leone to see their rich African heritage. They learned that "Gullah" and "Geechee" are not negative terms. Rather, they were names of tribes in Sierra Leone.

As I sat in the hotel ballroom during the religion and race meeting, tears formed in my eyes. I remembered how embarrassed Rose must have felt, wanting so badly to be accepted by our sorority. Yes, she finally became a "soror," but why did she have to experience such pain when she was only being herself?

I wonder: Are we United Methodists repeating such "ugly duckling" stories through our inability or unwillingness to embrace wholeheartedly our church's ethnic and cultural diversity?

Are we remaining silent while others discover that such diversity in our midst, properly understood, is really God's gift to us of a beautiful swan?

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Ms. Stovall is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And they assembled them at the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon."

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
_____	___ :	_____

(Last week's answer: Romans 14:7)

Readings for week of March 18

Monday: Psalms 51:1-9
Tuesday: Psalms 51:10-17
Wednesday: Jeremiah 31:31-34
Thursday: John 12:1-19
Friday: John 12:20-33
Saturday: Hebrews 5:1-6
Sunday: Hebrews 5:7-10

New readers in Springfield, Mo.: Welcome!

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 1,050 member-families of **Wesley United Methodist Church in Springfield, Missouri** (Missouri West Annual Conference).

This is the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Springfield, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

The United Methodist REPORTER

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Send Correspondence and Address Changes To:
P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275
Phone: (214) 630-6495
(Include mailing label with address changes)

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Use the coupon below to request your free copy of "The Charitable Gift Annuity" and learn how to make a gift and receive an income.

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P.O. Box 871
Nashville, Tennessee 37202
r191

Please send me my FREE copy of "The Charitable Gift Annuity."

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Faith watch

AMERICANS BELIEVE IN HEAVEN: The American public believes in both heaven and hell, according to a recently announced 1,108-person Gallup poll. About 78 percent believes in a heaven where people who have led good lives are eternally rewarded; 60 percent believe there is a hell, where those who have led bad lives without regrets are eternally damned. 78 percent said they had an excellent or good chance of going to heaven; only 4 percent felt that way about hell.

WOMEN PASTORS UP YEARLY: The number of women pastors in local United Methodist churches has increased by about 200 yearly since 1988, according to statistics compiled by the denomination's ordained ministry unit. Figures for 1990 show 3,187 women pastors, a one-year increase of 212. The 13 United Methodist-related theological schools report 1,099 women enrolled in master of divinity programs in 1990, up four from 1989.

3 NEW CHURCHES DAILY: Southern Baptists began about three churches daily last year in the U. S., according to statistics presented during the recent annual meeting of the denomination's Home Mission Board. The board was told that the total number of new churches in 1990 was between 968 and 1,201.

METHODIST GROUPS CONSULT: A mission partnership is being formed between the United Methodist Church and the Korean Methodist Church. A covenant statement announced after a late-February consultation recognizes the primary responsibility of United Methodists for mission work in the United States and of Korean Methodists for mission work in Korea. Consultation and cooperation on programs in other countries is proposed.

STORE FOUNDERS DONATE: A $6 million gift was made recently to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation by Sam and Helen Walton, founders of Wal-Mart stores. The Bentonville, Ark., couple aimed the donation at five education and development programs of that Protestant denomination. Mrs. Walton recently was elected the first chairwoman in the 192-year history of the foundation.

LIAISON NAMED TO USSR: Deacon Michael G. Roshak has been appointed by the United Bible Societies as their liaison officer to the Soviet Union. Mr. Roshak serves the National Council of Churches in New York as director of the Europe/USSR office. The NCC "seconded" him to the Bible Societies development work for two years because it is "imperative to provide the Christian Scriptures to a nation that has been denied easy access to the Bible for decades," said General Secretary James A. Hamilton.

HELP WAR REFUGEES: Church World Service, relief arm of the National Council of Churches, has sent $172,500 for food, medicine, tents and blankets to the Mideast Council of Churches to help alleviate suffering of refugees of the Persian Gulf War. Ms. Perri Graham, assistant regional director for CWS in Minneapolis, said the agency is asking for another $250,000 in gifts to help families, children and adults who have been injured or displaced by the war. "They are assessing the needs in Kuwait," Ms. Graham told the Reporter last week.

UCC CONGREGATION LEAVES: A Minneapolis-area United Church of Christ congregation has decided to leave the denomination, opposing the church's decision to admit a congregation composed of predominantly gay persons. Minnewashta Congregational Church in Shorewood, Minn., is the first Minnesota United Church congregation to leave the denomination as a result of the decision of the Minnesota Conference to open membership to Spirit of the Lakes Ecumenical Community Church in Minneapolis. However, almost a dozen United Church congregations in other conferences have left to protest the April 1990 decision, according to the Rev. Jeff Stinehelfer, head of the Minnesota Conference.

Prayerful respect for Muslims sought

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

Witness amid War

U.S. Jewish and Christian leaders have issued a call for a halt to all verbal abuse and violence against Arab-Americans, Muslims and their houses of worship.

March 15, 16 and 17 were set specifically as days of prayer when Christians and Jews are urged to affirm their respect for Muslims.

The dates, cited by the executive committee of Religion in American Life, fall on the eve of Ramadan, the month for fasting and spiritual renewal throughout Islam.

This interfaith call complemented prayers and hopes offered by United Methodists and others across the nation during worship services March 3 that lasting peace can be brought to the Middle East.

An informal survey by United Methodist News Service of a dozen congregations found accord with Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area) that United Methodists should "Praise God and hope we can seize the opportunity to deal with issues that will make for peace."

Bishop Talbert is secretary of the Council of Bishops and a leading figure in the religious community's efforts for peace in the Gulf.

Worshipers at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church in Cherry Hill, N.J., observed a silent Holy Communion, remembering particularly Navy Lt. Jeffrey Zaun, the U.S. prisoner of war who appeared on Iraqi television Jan. 20. His parents and sister are members of St. Andrew's.

A few hours later it was announced that Lt. Zaun had been among the first P.O.W.s released.

"Mrs. Zaun was positive all the way about the situation," said the Rev. Charles Wilcock, pastor at St.Andrew's. "She was sure things would work out."

The Rev. J. Michael Lowry, pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church in Corpus Christi, Texas, said the ceasefire was a focus of the sermon during a service that included the hymn "Now Thank We All our God."

The Texas church counted about 40 military personnel in the Gulf who were related to members of the congregation.

In Lovington, Ill., the Rev. Betty Coffey said many in that small community were waiting to be sure the war really is over before celebrating.

Worshipers at First United Methodist Church in Loveland, Colo., read once again the list of 40-50 names related in some way to the Gulf conflict and members of the congregation and prayed for their safe return.

The Rev. Tony Ashworth at the Colorado church said it was "a time of joy, but with hesitancy: Is it true? What does it mean? What will be the action of church and nation in reconciliation?"

In Hastings, Neb., a yellow candle beside the altar in First United Methodist Church was lighted once more to remind the congregation of the troops still on duty in the Gulf.

The Nebraskans have lighted the candle during the conflict in recognition of the 35-40 personnel from the community connected with members of the congregation, according to the Rev. Lyle Schoen.

Board seeks to meet church needs of late 90s

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Bishop Lawson

What will the life, work and ministry of United Methodist congregations look like in the late 1990s? How can the church's General Board of Discipleship best meet whatever those needs prove to be?

That's what the board's 102 directors tried to answer Feb. 27-March 3 during their next-to-last meeting for the 1989-92 quadrennium.

Bishop David J. Lawson (Wisconsin Area), who chairs the board's long-range strategy committee, told the Reporter that committee members "gave ourselves permission to consider a blank page" regarding the future of Discipleship's services to local congregations and annual conferences.

Highlights of the committee's first-phase report, approved unanimously by directors after extensive discussions, are:

✓ Major emphasis on the ministry of the laity, including but not limited to vocation, stewardship, faith development, social-political leadership, discipleship in the church, and witnessing to the faith;

✓ Expansion of effective ministries to stop the departure of men from the church;

✓ Establishment of five spiritual life centers, using existing facilities in each of the five U.S. jurisdictions, to "contribute to the fresh grounding of our United Methodist people in the Christian faith and movement."

✓ Increased emphasis on music, drama and other arts in the presentation of the Christian faith, especially through worship;

✓ Finding "radical models" to bring the story of the Christian faith alive to people in the 21st Century.

✓ Increased ministry to and with growing numbers of poor people and those who are alienated from society;

✓ Increased identification of Discipleship as a global board offering resources to United Methodists worldwide and to other Methodist denominations;

✓ Developing a philosophy and practice of "reciprocal programming and learning"—"to both share experiences and resources and to learn from the experience of the church in all its annual and central conferences."

✓ Continual experimentation with increasing variety of communications and service delivery systems, such as the two denominationwide satellite teleconferences held recently for local congregations by Worship and Stewardship staffs.

✓ Development of a network of "linking persons" who will help Discipleship staff provide resources to annual conferences.

Assessment of how these broad outlines might be realized has been assigned to the Discipleship staff, which is expected to report its progress to directors at the board's fall meeting.

UMMen report growth in members, units

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Bucking the churchwide trend of membership losses, United Methodist Men are reporting gains both in members and in the number of churches with United Methodist Men fellowships.

Jim Snead, staff member at the General Board of Discipleship, said that United Methodist Men has just celebrated its 14th year of growth, posting a one-year gain of nearly 8 percent in the number of fellowships in 1990.

Nearly 27 percent of the 37,700 United Methodist churches have chartered UMM fellowships, he said.

Surveys indicate, he said, that about 23,000 churches have specific men's ministry programs whether or not they have chartered men's groups.

"Several years ago, they were down to 1,100 fellowships chartered with United Methodist Men," said Mr. Snead. "Now we are up to nearly 10,000. We think there's new life."

Several programs are of specific interest to the men's organization, Mr. Snead said. They include Scouting ministries, hands-on mission projects and the organization's Moving Member Program.

Through the Moving Member Program in 1990, UMM referred 23,000 moving families to local pastors in their new communities.

As a result, more than 12,000 of the referred families joined another United Methodist congregation, he said.

United Methodist Men supports the Upper Room Living Prayer Center in Nashville through financial contributions to the center's WATS line. They also serve at times as volunteers who answer the phone when people call the center with prayer requests.

The men pray with the callers and forward the prayer requests to some of the 800 Upper Room-connected covenant prayer groups throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe, Mr. Snead said.

In spite of the increased activities in United Methodist Men, there is a concern that the church as a whole is losing men, said Charles L. Jones of Van Nuys, Calif. He chairs the board's Division on United Methodist Men.

The organization wants to change that by involving men in the life of the church, he said.

Although historically both clergy and laity were male dominated, that changed about 30 years ago, he said, when "the church made a concerted effort toward empowering women.

"But we (church men) can look back and realize we took a wrong direction," Mr. Jones said.

"For every three women put in (to a position) we took three men out," he said. "We didn't give them anything to do.

"We were giving them a subliminal message: men had no place in the church.

"Now we realize," he said, "either involve them or lose them."

Boy Scouts join hands with UMMen

An unusual partnership has evolved between United Methodist Men and Boys Scouts of America, according to Jim Snead, associate general secretary of the church's General Board of Discipleship.

For the next five years, Boy Scouts of America will fund salary and travel expenses for Dave Worley, the Discipleship board's director of youth-serving ministries.

Mr. Worley will relocate to the national Boy Scout headquarters in Las Colinas, Texas, where he will administer the church's program—including Boy Scout, Girl Scout and Camp Fire—for the duration of the agreement, Mr. Snead said.

In 1980, major cutbacks in staff forced the church's programming board to eliminate the part-time staff member responsible for Scouting programs.

United Methodist Men attempted to raise $1 million to endow a permanent staff position to oversee Scouting ministries, Mr. Snead said.

Rather than waiting until they raised all the money, they funded the position for eight years and placed 25 percent of their funds in the Scouting Ministry Endowment that now totals nearly $400,000, he said.

The present arrangement with Boy Scouts of America will allow United Methodist Men to reach the $1 million mark more quickly, he said.

At present, 333,000 youth are registered in United Methodist Scouting programs in some 10,000 churches, he said.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

Benefactor funds curriculum

NASHVILLE—Three child-abuse incidents in his town of Johnson City, Tenn., prompted Frank E. Oneal to donate $100,000 to the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship for the preparation and distribution of curriculum designed to prevent child abuse. He is a member of Muncy Memorial United Methodist Church.

Baptism proposal still generates challenges

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Proposals to clarify United Methodist understanding of baptism continue to generate discussion and dissent.

They did so most recently when the report from the Baptism Study Committee was presented to the General Board of Discipleship meeting in Nashville.

Two major issues continue to draw fire:

■ The proposal that baptism incorporates a person into full church membership, regardless of age;

■ The stipulation that baptism is unrepeatable.

The board referred both proposals back to the study committee for further consideration.

Concern was expressed by several people that the document, if adopted as it now stands by the church's 1992 legislative General Conference, would be "too inflexible" regarding rebaptism and infant dedication.

The document's emphasis on infant baptism was the center of much deliberation, particularly as it applies to church membership.

The Rev. Mark Trotter, chairperson of the Baptism Study Committee, presented the position of the report.

"These folk are baptized." Dr. Trotter said. "They may be small, they may be still learning . . . but they are still baptized, and for some crazy reason we don't fully understand, they are a part of us. So we count them (as baptized members) without counting on them."

Retired Bishop Ole Borgen, a member of the Baptism Study Committee often voting in the minority in committee discussions, was in the forefront in questioning the wisdom of the proposal.

Stressing that the infant cannot profess faith, that the vows at infant baptism are taken by parents or guardians, Bishop Borgen said, "We have a question here of vicarious faith."

> ***"These folk are baptized. They may be small, they may be still learning . . . but they are still baptized . . . ."***
>
> **Mark Trotter**

Therefore, the bishop said, if the present proposal were adopted, faith would no longer be the basis for church membership.

The other main problematic question, rebaptism, brought forth stories of personal pain and recommitment.

One speaker recounted his pain at not being able to remember his baptism. Another said she had been baptized three times because she, like many United Methodists, had changed denominations.

Yet another, who had been baptized as a child, said he did not really understand the meaning of being "baptized by the Holy Spirit" until midlife.

The Rev. Dale Dunlap, a principal drafter of the baptism study document, said the committee recognized such feelings and recommended new ways to address them.

After baptism, he said, "there will be numerous times when we have uncommon, focused awareness of the Spirit's presence."

The committee is proposing special worship services to publicly acknowledge these events, he said.

"You reaffirm, you celebrate these new experiences of the Spirit which is at work all of the time in our lives, even when we are not aware of it," Dr. Dunlap said.

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Faith connections

EVANGELISM DIRECTOR: The Rev. Roger Swanson, senior pastor of Bridgewater (N.J.) United Methodist Church, has been named director of evangelism ministries at the church's General Board of Discipleship. Dr. Swanson will be responsible for evangelism consultation and training with local congregations, including reaching inactive members and the unchurched. Dr. Swanson succeeds Dr. Suzanne Braden, who became assistant dean of Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

HEALTH IMPROVES: J. Harry Haines, former chief executive for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, is reported in stable condition at the University of Utah Medical Center after what was described as a heart stoppage. He was stricken in early March following a speech at First United Methodist Church in Peoria, Ill. His son, Dr. John Haines, a physician, said his father is expected to be released in mid-March. Cards and letters may be sent to 126 Qauenida Majorca, Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

BMCR ANNUAL MEETING: National Black Methodists for Church Renewal will hold its 24th annual meeting March 20-23 at the Stouffer's Presidente Hotel in Houston. Keynote speaker for the closing banquet will be the Rev. Alfred Norris, president of Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta.

PRESIDENTS LEADER: The Rev. Jerald C. Walker, president of United Methodist-related Oklahoma City University, has been named vice chairman and spokesman for the Pacific Rim University's President's Association. Thirty unversities from the U.S. and nine Asian countries participate in the organization.

HISPANIC ARTS: The first churchwide United Methodist workshop to focus entirely on Hispanic worship, music and other arts will be held at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville March 18-21.

RURAL LIFE THEME: "Keeping the Garden—Stewardship of the Environment" is the theme for Rural Life Sunday, to be observed May 5. The United Methodist Rural Fellowship is offering a packet of Rural Life Sunday resources including bulletin covers, liturgies and worship aids, posters, a children's coloring book, sermon outlines and other materials. To obtain a packet, send $5 to the fellowship at 108 Balow Wynd, Columbia, Mo. 65203.

UMs told: Check bank policies

Religion, race agency asks if institutions are investing locally

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

CHARLESTON, S.C.—Are the financial institutions—banks, savings and loans and others—that churches in your area do business with meeting their federal obligations to reinvest in your community? Most specifically, in low to moderate income neighborhoods?

If your answer is "No!" the church's General Commission on Religion and Race wants to help change that situation.

During the commission's spring meeting in Charleston Feb.28-March 3, members recommended that all United Methodist general agencies, theological schools, and annual conferences doing business with banks, saving and loans, and other financial institutions secure a copy of the institutions' Community Reinvestment Act rating from the Federal Reserve.

The Community Reinvestment Act requires that each financial institution's listing of how it meets the credit needs of the community be made public. The Federal Reserve and other federal financial regulatory agencies determine if banks and savings and loans are complying with these consumer laws.

"The commission wants to know, 'Are these institutions reinvesting in the communities they serve?' " said the Rev. Luther W. Henry of Fort Worth, Texas, who chairs the Religion and Race agency's review committee.

Dr. Henry told the Reporter that the commission plans to communicate immediately with the church's General Council on Finance and Administration on the need to include compliance with the act as criteria for depositing church funds in financial institutions.

He said finance council is expected to "report by Aug. 15 on what steps have been taken and the results of such steps."

Elected members of the religion and race agency will also ask the church's General Board of Pensions to hear a presentation by the Rev. Charles Stith of the Organization for a New Equality on a "Blueprint for Economic Revitalization."

In this blueprint Mr. Stith, who is pastor of Union United Methodist Church in Boston, and members of a National Urban Economic Summit developed recommendations for regulatory agencies, legislators, lenders and the community. The intent of these recommendations is to ensure that the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 and the Financial Reform and Recovery and Enforcement Act of 1989 are both fully implemented.

"We're raising this issue with the Pensions board, but we want all our general agencies, theological schools and annual conferences to reconsider how this act impacts our communities," said Dr. Henry. "People don't realize that this is a federal law."

Commission members say they will also direct the constituency resources committee to include this information and a monitoring process in a manual for annual conference religion and race committees.

The Rev. Charles Stith
. . . presents economic blueprint

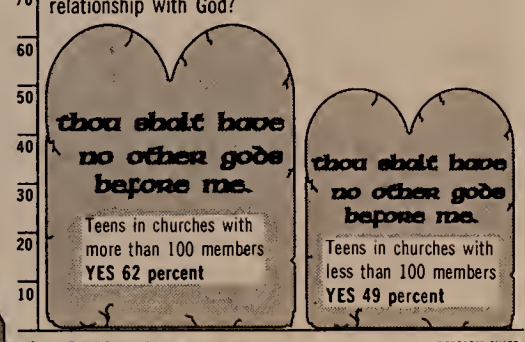
Faith Snapshot (Second of four parts)

How does church size affect teen-agers' religious experiences?

Teen ministry in churches of less than 100 members may be considerably less effective than the ministries of larger churches. These findings of a recent study on teen-agers' religious experiences by Barna Research Group of Glendale, Calif., raise concerns about the impact smaller churches are able to have on teens' spiritual lives.

Query:

As an adult, would it be your priority to have a close relationship with God?



Source: 'Today's Teens: A Generation in Transition' REPORTER CHART

How should agencies be ended?

Reporter Staff Special

CHARLESTON, S.C.—Members of United Methodism's General Commission on Religion and Race did some informal strategizing on institutional survival during their recent meeting (see related story above).

The goal is to amend the United Methodist Book of Discipline so that neither this agency nor any other general agency of the church can be dissolved without one legislative body of the church (General Conference) assigning a study group to report back to the next General Conference four years later.

Two things prompted the discussion:

■ Recollection of an attempt to eliminate the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women during the most recent General Conference (1988).

■ A reported movement to ask the 1992 General Conference to terminate the women's advocacy group, the Religion and Race commission and the church's general coordinating agency, the General Council on Ministries.

Barbara Thompson, chief executive for Religion and Race, said several commissioners feel that such action on the General Conference floor "was not a responsible way to attempt to end an agency."

Religion and Race commissioners voted to ask the church's racial ethnic caucuses and its own interethnic development committee to propose a change in legislative language.

"We will communicate to the caucuses that this is legislation that is good for the church, and we hope they agree," said Ms. Thompson.

The Rev. Marcus Matthews of Bel Air, Md., said one reason the commission members addressed the issue informally rather than in open policymaking session was that they might seem to be reacting to an issue that is unfounded.

"You only need to go to the annual conferences to see that this commission is needed," he said.

"As long as we are working in direct response to the people in the annual conferences, there will always be a need for religion and race."

In other action, Religion and Race:

■ Approved $282,500 from the church's Minority Self Determination Fund for 34 projects.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Church plays nation-building role in Burundi, reports African bishop

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

People of faith, including large numbers of United Methodists, are playing major roles in the building of a new hope in the east African country of Burundi.

United Methodist Bishop J. Alfred Ndoricimpa (Burundi Area) told the Reporter recently that his country is "much improved" since ethnic strife divided its 6 million people two years ago.

In 1989, 5,000 Burundians were killed in clashes between the ruling Tutsi—who make up 15 percent of the population—and the numerically predominant, but largely powerless, Hutu.

Bishop Ndoricimpa has served on a peace commission charged with restructuring Burundi's government to make it more fairly representative of the country's two ethnic groups.

The bishop said Burundi's cabinet now is composed of 24 ministers, 12 each Hutu and Tutsi.

A commission has been formed to make recommendations on Burundi's struggling economic system.

Bishop Ndoricimpa
. . . situation "much improved"

Again, the economics commissioners are equally divided—20 Hutu, 20 Tutsi.

The new committee for national security—one of whose primary jobs to try to prevent the kinds of violence that occurred two years ago—is composed of 6 Hutu and 6 Tutsi.

All of these changes were recommended by Bishop Ndoricimpa's peace commission.

"Living together now is better than ever," the bishop said. "Now it is all right to identify your heritage, whether you are Hutu or Tutsi, without causing fear."

Among the new leaders in Burundi's government is Felicissima Nzohabonayo, who is a member of the newly appointed central committee, similar to a congress. Mrs. Nzohabonayo is vice president of United Methodist Women in Burundi.

"Church members of every faith, including United Methodists, are on every new commission," Bishop Ndoricimpa said. "The relationship between the church and the state is much improved; there is no more persecution."

While much improved, Burundi's safety is not yet assured, the bishop added.

"There are extremists on each side who resist the changes," he noted. "And there is still some question on the loyalty of all in the army, most of whom are Tutsi."

Consequently, the bishop said he hopes United Methodists worldwide will continue to pray for the future of Burundi and their fellow Christians there.

Anniversary of Wesley's death marked

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

MOORESTOWN, N.J.—The 200th anniversary of John Wesley's death was marked March 2 here with expressions of hope that the principles of the founder of the Methodist movement "may be resurrected in our day."

As set out in the closing litany of the observance, these points are "free grace, new birth, witness of the Spirit, full salvation, and holiness of heart and life." Speakers earlier in the program here touched on many of the principles.

About 150 persons attended the observance, the principal U.S. event of its kind, marking Wesley's death March 2, 1791. In England, commemorations were held at Wesley's Chapel in City Road, and Central Hall, Westminster.

The observance here was marked by presentation from The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, Tenn., of a newly completed, life-size sculpture of Wesley to the church's national Commission on Archives and History.

A few hours earlier, the original by Mary Quinn had been unveiled at the Central Hall commemoration.

The ceremonies here also saw the introduction of a new tune for a Wesley hymn commissioned especially for the bicentennial of Wesley's death by the Southern New Jersey Annual Conference.

Known as "Moorestown," the tune was composed by the Rev. Timothy E. Kimbrough, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Papers presented here discussed the essentials of the Wesleyan heritage, the doctrine of "going on to perfection," Wesley's contributions to worship, the evolution of U.S. Methodism, and thoughts as to what Wesley might do if he were alive today.

In the latter discussion, United Methodist Bishop Neil L. Irons, Pennington, N.J., president of the Commission on Archives and History and episcopal leader of New Jersey, said Wesley would have loved computers. The bishop chuckled at the thought of Methodism's founder using floppy discs for tracts and sermons to be spread across the country.

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Musicians mark Mozart's death

By JOHN J. DUNNE

Mozart will be an honored name throughout 1991 in many churches and concert halls around the world

Prestigious musical events will mark the 200th anniversary of the death of an amazing child prodigy who became a great composer.

Although he confounded the foremost musicians of his time and played before crowned heads across Europe, no mourners attended his funeral, and he was buried in a pauper's grave.

Johann Chrysostom Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salsburg, Austria, Jan. 27, 1756.

Playing at age 3

By age 3 Wolfgang could play the harpsicord and the violin with delightful ease. When he was 5 he was composing minuets.

At age 7 he and his sister played in Vienna, Munich, Paris and London, to their spellbound audiences' delight.

Mozart, age 7, performs with his father and sister.

During the tour they were received by the Empress Marie Theresa in Vienna.

Wolfgang, remarkable prodigy though he was, sprang into the lap of the empress, clasping her around the neck and kissing her enthusiastically!

Another royal encounter by the young Mozart has tragic undertones.

He was taken to perform before members of the royal family of Austria. As he entered the reception chamber, Wolfgang slipped on the highly polished floor and was promptly helped to his feet by a little princess of his own age.

She was Marie Antoinette. She and Wolfgang were destined to die within two years of each other, he in destitution and poverty, she on the guillotine.

In 1768 he was appointed concert master to the Archbishop of Salsburg.

After a disastrous venture to Paris in 1777 where his concerts were an artistic failure, he returned to Salsburg disconsolate.

The years left to Mozart were marred by ill health, artistic frustration and increasing poverty.

Lured by the artistic prestige and promise of Vienna, he moved there with his wife, Constanze.

Jealousies because of his great talent beset him.

Towards the end of 1787, when he had written "The Marriage of Figaro" and "Don Giovanni," he was appointed court composer to the Emperor, but at an extremely low salary.

Ill and poor in Vienna

While he was ill and poor in Vienna, Wolfgang wrote his best works, the "Quintets in D Major and E Flat," the "Piano Concerto in B Flat" and his finest opera, "The Magic Flute."

In September 1791, only a few months before his death, Mozart composed his "Requiem." But death overtook him before the work was finished.

Aside from his "Requiem," a work of unsurpassed beauty, Wolfgang Mozart composed 15 masses, ten operas, 41 symphonies, nine quintets and 30 quartets.

Wolfgang Mozart died on the crisp, frosty Monday that was Dec. 5, 1791. He was 35.

Mr. Dunne is a freqaent contribator to the Reporter. He is a freelance writer in Dublin, Ireland.

ORION PICTURES PHOTO BY BEN GLASS

Kevin Costner stars as Lt. John Dunbar in "Dances with Wolves." The film is one of five nominated in the Academy Awards Best Picture category. According to the article below, all five embody some old verities and ancient religious traditions.

Review

'Catch the Spirit' tackles tricky issues

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Churches tend to "put on a happy face" and shy away from acknowledging divisions and differences within the flock.

It is commendable, therefore, to see the way in which "Catch the Spirit," United Methodist Communications' weekly TV program, is tackling some debates within its corner of Christendom.

The program that airs March 17-23 takes on the topic: what is the mission of the church?

There is considerable conflict among church leaders as to how we should pursue church growth. Should we avoid taking stands on social issues?

Should we form homogeneous congregations in which visitors will find a sanctuary full of folks who look just like them?

Should we concentrate on locations where numeric growth of congregations is expected to come easily?

The "Catch the Spirit" segments make an understated argument on behalf of a very different sort of evangelism.

The program opens and closes with the stirring singing of the New Faith Ministry, a group that grew out of pastor/musician Moses Dillard's work with inmates at the Tennesee State Penitentiary—not the sort of place usually targeted by church-growth experts.

PHOTO BY RONNY PERRY

The Rev. Moses Dillard (right) and Ira William (center) talk about their "New Life Ministry" with "Catch the Spirit" co-host Hilly Hicks in a program to air the week of March 17. Check local listings for time and date.

Nor do those who coach parsons on crowd-pleasing preaching recommend displays of pastoral emotion, yet a turning point in Mr. Dillard's prison ministry came when he broke down in tears while hearing 260 young black convicts sing "Precious Lord, take my hand."

What resulted was an inmate choir whose gospel album will soon be released by Warner Brothers.

Next we see an update on the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative on Drugs and Violence and learn how one pastor discovered "crack" houses in his comfortable, prosperous neighborhood only when his son admitted at a community meeting that he was an addict.

This sort of public confession may not be a recommended way to improve the church's image, but it drove a clergyman to confront the disease in a child he loved and to confront evil in the community around him, leading the church into courageous discipleship.

The episode concludes with a profile of an inner-city, interracial congregation in Boston with a pastor in a cross-ethnic appointment and a ministry with those "American society has overlooked," such as alcoholics, substance abusers and the homeless.

According to many church-growth strategists such a congregation is doomed to die, yet the Church of All Nations has experienced a remarkable rebirth and has "recaptured the old spirit of social salvation and social holiness"—which is at the heart of Methodist tradition.

It is entirely possible that the folks at UMCom made this program without intending any comment on the "church growth movement." Nonetheless, they have reminded us that conversion and growth in grace often come in ways that Jesus practiced but experts seldom suggest, for God works in mysterious ways.

Mr. Goodhae, of Island Park, N.Y., freqaently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

Best picture nominees show desire for truth

By FREDERIC BRUSSAT and MARY ANN BRUSSAT
Religious News Service

The American public's impulse to embrace old truths and religious traditions in times of uncertainty is evident in this year's Academy Award nominees for Best Picture.

They are "GoodFellas," "Ghost," "The Godfather, Part III," "Awakenings" and "Dances With Wolves."

The winner will not be announced until March 25, but the nominations alone reveal a pattern. All reflect a societal urge to reclaim old verities.

'GoodFellas'

"Crime doesn't pay" is the message of "GoodFellas," which gives the familiar admonition a new modern twist.

Henry Hill, a half-Irish and half-Sicilian youngster, is attracted to the lifestyle, power and devil-may-care attitudes of a group of gangsters in his neighborhood. He quickly wins a place in their family.

When Henry begins selling and using drugs against orders, his superiors turn against him. Fearing for his life, he decides to testify against the mob in exchange for relocation in the Witness Protection Program.

At the end of the film, Henry is a sobered man. Sure, he's alive, but now he has to live like everyone else. Crime does not pay.

'Ghost'

"Love is forever" is the sentimental theme of "Ghost," a surprise nominee which obviously touched a public nerve.

When Sam, a young investment banker, is senselessly murdered on the street, his girlfriend, Molly, is left alone in her sorrow

Then Sam returns as a ghost with a threefold mission. He wants to find his killer, to protect Molly and tell her that he loved her, something he was never able to express in words while alive.

When he succeeds in all three interventions, the audience cheers.

One reason for the popularity of "Ghost" is the public's need to believe that those who have died are still with us in spirit. Another reason is a longing for stability in love.

When relationships flounder and half of all marriages end in divorce, the idea that love can and will persist is very appealing.

'The Godfather, Part III'

Even among notorious gangsters there are traditional values.

"Family is the most important thing" is the verity presented in "The Godfather, Part III."

It was also the theme of the two previous Godfather films.

In the opening scene of this film, 60-year-old Michael Corleone is being honored by the Catholic church for his charitable contributions of millions of dollars.

Rich and powerful, he seeks respectability and a legacy. He wants to move his crime syndicate into legitimate businesses. More importantly, he wants to insure that his family survives.

When he has to appoint a successor, however, the family legacy turns out to be violence, not solidarity.

'Awakenings'

"Life is precious" is the truth proclaimed by "Awakenings."

The film, set in the 1960s, tells the true story of a group of patients in a Brooklyn hospital who had existed in a sleep-like state since the encephalitis epidemic in the 1920s.

Modern day "Lazarus" Leonard Lowe wakes from this state when Dr. Malcolm Sayer decides to administer the miracle drug L-Dopa. In short order, he becomes reacquainted with the enchantments of the world.

Eventually the side effects of the drug treatment send Leonard careening back to his original state, but not before he has shown film audiences how to savor even the most mundane of daily activities.

'Dances With Wolves'

"Community gives life meaning" is the central point of "Dances With Wolves," the Academy Award nominee with the most universal appeal.

Lt. John Dunbar, a cavalry officer during the Civil War, is posted to a deserted fort deep in the frontier territory inhabited by the Lakota Sioux.

When his Native American neighbors learn that he is peaceful and even friendly, they welcome the outsider.

Mr. Dunbar, the stranger in a strange land, finds a community whose values enrich and expand his kinship with the land and its animals.

Mr. Dunbar's admiration of this close-knit, harmonious community is one which film audiences share. Many people today yearn for a return to the small homogeneous communities characteristic of early America.

People leading transient and fragmented lives in pluralistic and increasingly polarized neighborhoods long to feel that sense of belonging and common purpose experienced by Mr. Dunbar while living with the Lakota.

Of all the Best Picture Academy Award nominees, "Dances With Wolves" is the most daring in its moral vision. It celebrates and demonstrates hospitality toward strangers, a deeply religious tradition dating from ancient times.

It points out the importance of empathy and trust as qualities which foster and nourish community. It affirms that one individual can break down barriers between peoples.

These, too, are old verities. Any film that reclaims them deserves an award.

Dear Deborah

My wife is nagging me to have a living will

Dear Deborah:

My wife has been nagging me for so long I am really getting angry.

She wants me to have a living will and something she calls a power of attorney for health care. She learned about these at some women's meeting at church. I have not had any peace since.

I don't see any need for them. Do you?

John

Dear John:

I certainly do see a need for them, and your church leadership should be commended for having such a program for the women in your church.

I hope you will listen to your wife and go with her to an attorney to find out the exact details needed under the laws of your state.

A living will addressed to your physician and health care providers makes it possible for your wishes to be known, even if you are unable to tell them at the time.

A health care power of attorney gives the person you designate the authority to make specific health care—often life and death—decisions if you are unable to do so for yourself.

Both of these are usually needed, and I believe they are the Christian and loving thing to do for your family and loved ones.

It will spare them the extra stress and grief of having to make decisions under pressure and will assure that your wishes are known and respected

In today's world, Christians have to work hard to live life in Christ, and we also need to be prepared to face our physical death in the same loving and caring way.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Professor sues to express his beliefs

TUSCALOOSA, Ala—When the University of Alabama forbid professor Phil Bishop to talk about his religious beliefs in the classroom, he sued the school. The court's decision is expected to have national impact. Activists see the school's action as an example of of hostility to religious points of view in university classrooms.

History of Hymns

Crucifixion of Christ is subject of Lenten hymn

Alas, and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For sinners such as I?

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Under the heading "Godly Sorrow Arising from the Sufferings of Christ," the hymn appeared in a collection of hymns by Isaac Watts published in London in 1707.

Watts, a Congregational minister, served a congregation that met on Mark Lane in London.

Today any congregation singing the hymn shares with Watts in contemplating the crucifixion of Christ with amazement and wonder.

In response to a full awareness of the event of Calvary "for man, the creature's sin," the final stanza becomes an expression of total commitment:

Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do.

For more than two and a half centuries, editors of hymnals have altered some of the lines.

In the last century, for example, the line "for sinners such as I" has become almost universal, reflecting the apostle Paul's statement, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:15).

The tune "Martyrdom" used for Watts's hymn was composed by Hugh Wilson, a native of Fenwick in Ayrshire, Scotland.

A shoemaker by trade, Mr. Wilson led the psalm singing in his church.

He supplemented his income by teaching classes in reading, arithmetic and music for the villagers.

One of his hobbies was designing sundials, one of which may still be seen in Fenwick, about 15 miles southwest of Glasgow.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"All Glory, Laud and Honor"

Good Samaritan Ministries of the Louisiana Conference

— Lafon United Methodist Home

— Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital

— People's Community Center

Good Samaritan Offering Assists Total Patient Care

Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital

Three things characterize health care ministry today. The first is that the Chaplain is part of the team providing health care for the whole person. Secondly, patients in the hospital are valuable to themselves. Religious faith is important for healing the physical hurts. Finally, Chaplains represent life and dignity for each person. They share life with the patients in both its good and bad moments. Their presence during a crisis is to communicate to a patient that his hurt is shared, and that they will share the pain by caring and helping to maintain the dignity of that person's life. Chaplains, thus, share with people the good news that through every person working in the hospital, God cares for every patient, family member and staff person. Chaplains are administrators of the Sacraments of the Church, and provider of worship services. Protestant and Catholic services are conducted in the Chapel and may be viewed on closed circuit television by the patient.

The Chaplain is in a unique position to help the individual deal with emotional and spiritual problems. Chaplains can help patients deal with hopes, fears, attitudes and relationships with God, others and self. Chaplains also help with the grieving experience.

For example, the Chaplain visits a patient, who is scheduled for surgery the next day. In conversation, the Chaplain senses that the patient was extremely frightened. After a time, the patient told the Chaplain that the next day was the tenth anniversary of the death of her mother. Her fear was evident that she would die during surgery. Following the conversation, the Chaplain contacted her physician and informed him of the patient's concern. The doctor then delayed surgery one day. The patient entered with confidence that she would recover totally.

At Methodist Hospital, the Department of Pastoral Care is staffed by Chaplain Paul G. Durbin, Director; Chaplain Judy Nelson, Associate; Father Tim Pieris, part-time Catholic Chaplain; a deacon; several Eucharistic Ministers; and Kim Purdum, Secretary. In addition to the regular staff, there are a number of clinical pastoral training students involved in two or three 13-week courses annually.

Chaplain Paul Durbin received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Centenary College, a Master of Divinity from Emory University, and a Doctor of Philosophy from the American Institute of Hypnotherapy. He was ordained by the Methodist Church in 1962, and entered the U.S. Army as a Chaplain. Durbin received clinical training at Walter Reed Medical Center, as Chaplain for the Burn Center at Brooke Army Medical Center prior to coming to Methodist Hospital in 1976. Chaplain Durbin is a retired Brigadier General who was the first Army National Guard Chaplain to make General in the history of our nation. He is also a Clinical Hypnotherapist, and was Member of the Year for 1986-87 of the National Association for Clergy Hypnotherapists.

Chaplain Judy Nelson, a native of Texas, graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from West Texas State University. She received a Master of Religion from Pepperdine University in California, and a Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theology Seminary. Her clinical training was based at High Plains Baptist Hospital in Texas with advanced hospital training in New Orleans. Chaplain Nelson is Secretary of the Southwest Region of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. She has been a member of the Methodist staff since May 1982.

In the next few weeks, members of the Methodist church will be asked to share their blessings with those who are less fortunate. The Good Samaritan Offering will provide an opportunity to assist the sick and the suffering who require the services of Methodist Hospital.

Each patient at Methodist Hospital is a trinity within himself, made up of body, mind and spirit. Whatever affects one area would impact the other two. At Methodist Hospital, this philosophy of "holistic medicine," which is concerned with the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of each patient, is vital to total patient care. Under this philosophy, the Chaplain is a member of the health care team. Patients come to the Hospital with many feelings, concerns and fears. Only when these are properly dealt with can physical healing proceed at the optimal level. Chaplains provide counseling for patients and family members. Probably, the most difficult barrier in pastoring to individuals is the image of what a Chaplain is or ought to be.

The title "Chaplain" began with Martin of Tours, the fourth century Saint. Legend dictates that Martin shared his cloak with a beggar, keeping the smaller part for himself. Thus, little "cape" or "capella" became a relic. The custodian of the capella was a priest, and eventually the keeper of the capella became known as Chaplain. Today, the title is used by hospitals and other health care institutional ministers, priests and rabbis.

In the next few weeks, you will have an opportunity to assist Methodist Hospital through your "Good Samaritan Offering." This special Fund is available to help those in need of critical surgical and diagnostic hospital care that they would otherwise be unable to afford.

The medical profession is becoming more and more aware of how emotional and spiritual concerns affect the treatment of physical problems. The Chaplains at Methodist Hospital are available to all individuals as needed. Please consider a donation to the Good Samaritan Offering on Easter Sunday.

Chaplain Paul G. Durbin visits with a patient at Methodist Hospital.

Chaplain Judy Nelson delivers the Sacraments during a worship service in the Chapel.

Funds from your Easter Sunday Good Samaritan Offering will be utilized to assist individuals in receiving medical services, such as surgery, which they are unable to afford.

Lafon United Methodist Home

Scenes from 1991 Annual Carnival

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace — Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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The Cross of the Red Stick

I have had so many comments and questions about the cross that led the processional at The Gathering that I want to share with you information that I think will be meaningful.

The cross was made by the elder member of the Houma Indian congregation at Clanton Chapel, Dulac. Lawrence "Mr. Moot" Billiot, a longtime builder of wooden boats for the seafood industry fashioned the cross from his memory as it represents ancient symbols of an earlier era when the Houmas lived around "Red Stick" (Baton Rouge) and the red pole was used as a boundary and identity marker.

The cross will be placed in the main lobby of the Conference office and the symbolism of the cross will be explained as follows:

The large gold ring around the cross represents God and his power around us. The smaller ring represents Jesus Christ, our Savior, who came to die for us on the cross that we may be saved.

The cross stands on this earth, (the green line) from which the love of Jesus flowed to all of us. As Houma Indian people, we received our Christian Faith as the first in the Lower Mississippi Delta.

The ribbons of many colors represent all the people of the earth which Jesus Christ came for and died for. The red ribbon on the cross represents the Holy Spirit which is with us to comfort and strengthen us.

The cross is held up on a red pole to symbolize the boundary between the Houmas and other tribes when we lived near Baton Rouge. Our state capital is named after our boundary pole.

We are also grateful to Rev. Kirby Verret, "Mr. Moot," and the laity who made the beautiful altar baskets used for almost 500 covenant statements from local churches across Louisiana.

William B. Oden

God Smiled On Louisiana Today!

11,000 Participants Celebrate The Louisiana Gathering

"God smiled on Louisiana today!" exclaimed more than one of the 11,000 participants who "gathered at the river" in Baton Rouge on March 9 for The Louisiana Gathering.

A crisp, sunny day provided a perfect backdrop for the celebration of the diversity and life of United Methodism in Louisiana. Bishop William B. Oden proclaimed that he "was overwhelmed" by the beauty and spirit of the total experience.

Thousands of individuals arrived by 10 a.m. to rehearse, practice, greet old friends, or simply bask in the pleasure of the moment. Five musical ensembles entertained the arrivals as many ate previously-packed luncheons and John Wesley (alias Bill Vance of Fort Worth, Texas,) lectured Bishops, choirs, ministers, and lay-people alike on their duties and responsibilities to the church. At the same time, one-thousand youth were having lunch with Bishop Oden, Bishop Richard Wilke of Arkansas and Dr. Zan Wesley Holmes at First United Methodist Church.

One half-hour before the worship service began, the happy, excited voices in the packed arena quietened to hear the combined Dillard University and Centenary College Choirs led respectively by Dr. Carver Davenport and Dr. Bill Andress.

When the concert ended, the Reverend Charles B. Simmons, chairperson of the Gathering Steering Committee, welcomed guests and participants and thanked the hundreds of dedicated church volunteers who had made the event possible. Special appreciation was given to the Reverend Donald C. Cottrill, Director Conference Council on Ministries; Mrs. Esther Socolofsky, worship coordinator; and Mr. Bill Ernst, Mr. Walter Brock, Mr. Paul Eldridge, and Mr. Harold Austin, who supervised the building of the 56-feet octagonal platform with an 8-feet high altar in-the-round that provided the dramatic, visual focal point for the service. Fountains of water flowed from the altar's center as a symbolic representation of the "living waters" of vital faith.

The festival of banners heralded the start of worship. From the four portals, 500 plus local-church banner carriers paraded across the altar producing a spectacular panoply of color and pageantry that foretold the experiential pleasure that was to come. Next came the procession of ministers who were led by Kirby Verret, a tribal leader of the Houma Indian Nation and United Methodist pastor, carrying a replica of the first cross used by the Houma Indians. The processional began with the retired clergy and their spouses.

After greetings from Governor Buddy Roemer, a United Methodist; entertainment by the children's liturgical dance choir; and prayers and music by the congregation; the Reverend Dr. Zan Holmes spoke. Declaring that our greatest temptation as Christians is to "compromise with popular expectations of the world instead of becoming the church God has called us to be," Dr. Holmes urged the congregation to claim its rightful identity by remembering their individual baptisms. "The good news of the Gospel," he said, "is when we remember our baptism . . . and know that we are sons and daughters of God."

Each participant then renewed his/her baptismal covenant with water symbolically drawn from the living waters of the altar as Bishop Oden poured its contents into pitchers carried by the District Superintendents to bowls waiting below. The combined, 2000-member adult choir; combined 600-member youth choir; and combined college choirs provided the music for meditation before the renewal of membership vows. Afterwards, an offering was taken that will be divided equally among the Africa University, and pre-ministerial scholarships at Centenary College and Dillard University.

Bishop Richard Wilke was the next speaker. Asking the question, "can a church be born again?" Bishop Wilke declared that "sociology will not save us and church strategy will not sanctify us." We as a church are saved only when we do "the same stuff Jesus did!" Bishop Wilke urged United Methodists to go to the people who need us, "to reach out over our arms to children and young people," and to "rediscover the word of God" for our church's salvation.

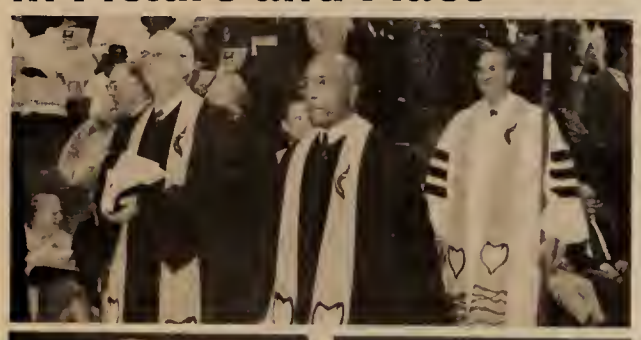
The final experience of the celebration followed Bishop Wilke's directive for mission by the personal offering of service from each church. Representative from each local church placed their church's congregational Mission Statement, written on parchment, around the altar in baskets made for the occasion by Houma Indians.

Diaconal and ordained ministers then renewed their commitment to ministry by sharing some of John Wesley's Covenant Service on the steps of the altar.

Perhaps the most touching aspect of this part of the worship came next. At the invitation of Bishop Oden, scores of people came forward to offer their intention for church-related Christian ministry. The service ended with a benediction and recessional led by the Dillard Jazz Band outside to the river. The next day, March 10, each local congregation repeated the renewal of baptismal covenant in United Methodist Churches across Louisiana as part of the continuation of the VISION 2000 initiative that sparked the Louisiana Gathering.

In the words of Bishop Oden, "The Gathering proved once again the strength of the connection as a powerful vehicle for our spiritual journey. There is no doubt that The Gathering will affect our conference for years to come. Thirty years from now — deep into the 21st century — there will be faithful United Methodists, lay and clergy, who will look back on The Gathering as the pivotal religious experience of their lives."

The Louisiana Gathering in Picture and Place



The Louisiana Gathering: Visions of Grace

Choirs singing. Bands playing. Speakers preaching. Hands clapping. Voices praising. The sounds of the Louisiana Gathering spoke to the heart of those who came. The visual presence of the Gathering, however, spoke to their souls.

Sequential waves of individuals moving up and down the altar steps carrying brightly colored banners, ribboned-rolled covenant statements, and clear bowls of baptismal water imitated the blue liquid cascading down the sides of the 8-feet-high altar whose center held the fountain of "living waters" that symbolized baptism into the faith.

The one-hundred pound cross and flame suspended high above the octangular altar resonated the red and gold colors of the cross as a reminder of the passion of the Lenten season. Purple stoles on hundreds of ministers' robes matched the stoles of the speakers as they created lavender ribbons across multiple rows of seats.

The Houma-Indian made cross standing parallel to the Bishop's staff, near the altar was a visible reminder of both the diversity and history of the meaning of the Christian experience.

Finally, the overwhelming presence of 11,000 people joined in worship, praise, and thanksgiving on a bright, crisp, heaven-sent day gave ample testimony to the vision of our Church under God's unfailing grace.

Overheard at The Louisiana Gathering

From an Alexandria laywoman: "It's the most beautiful worship service I've ever experienced."

* * *

From a Many clergyman: "As I approached Baton Rouge I saw a puff of black smoke. It reminded me of the pillar of cloud that led the Israelites to the promised land."

* * *

From a Shreveport laywoman: "I sat there 2½ hours and didn't feel as if any time had passed at all."

* * *

From a Louisiana Bishop: "I have never been a part of anything so magnificent in my life."

* * *

From a Louisiana Governor: "When I was young I wanted to go into the Methodist ministry, but I became diabetic and the doctor told me the ministry would cause too much stress, so I went into politics instead."

* * *

From a Metairie laywoman: "Surely God is in this place."

* * *

From a Baton Rouge clergyman: "The best thing I've ever seen happen in the Methodist Church."

* * *

From a nine-year old banner carrier: "There is the greatest day of my life."

* * *

From a Quitman laywoman: "John and Charles Wesley would have been proud!"

* * *

From a Bunkie clergyman: "I was overwhelmed when the minister came down to repeat our Confirmation service. I had a strong sense of pride in the connectionalism of the Methodist Church."

* * *

From a Plaquemine laywoman: "The music was absolutely beautiful. I especially enjoyed the music that I could stomp my feet and clap my hands to."

* * *

From hundreds of participants: "It was wonderful. We should do this every year."

* * *

From a tired Louisiana Gathering Coordinator: "Who wants to be in charge of the next gathering?"

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Keeping life in perspective

Score points for Chris Collier.

The star player for the Georgia State University basketball team recently made a quiet but timely witness about keeping sports—and life as a whole—in proper perspective.

According to a daily newspaper story, Mr. Collier, a member of the Worldwide Church of God, refuses to play basketball or participate in other activities on his religion's Sabbath—sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday.

As a result, Georgia State petitioned the National Collegiate Athletic Association to schedule its team's game in the first round of the NCAA tournament for a time that didn't conflict with Mr. Collier's Sabbath. The petition was granted.

We commend Mr. Collier for upholding this tenet of his faith—"keep the Sabbath holy"—which is, in fact, part of the religious heritage of mainstream Christianity.

A young man has to have considerable moral and spiritual fiber to place the requirements of his religion ahead of the pressures of big-time college sports.

Others of us should be challenged by Mr. Collier's example. His witness to the spiritual importance of the Sabbath as "time out" from the daily routine, and as "time in" for the worship of God, is particularly pertinent to mainline Christians who may have lost sight of that wisdom.

Maintaining such a "time out/time in" discipline is especially difficult in a predominantly secular culture. The world's "business"—from supermarkets to movie theaters to real estate promotions—has become virtually non-stop. Sundays in most areas are no exception.

Compounding that reality and the temptation it poses to "do business" seven days per week, the livelihoods of many Christians frequently require working on Sundays. This places them in conflict with their church's tradition, with their own consciences and with their congregation's weekly worship services.

Hence, the command, "keep the Sabbath holy," is an especially pertinent challenge to contemporary Christians. In a non-stop world, it calls us to keep life in its proper perspective as a precious gift of God.

The spiritual and physical health of that gift requires that our work be balanced with regular opportunities for worship and praise of the One "from whom all blessings flow"—preferably as part of a worshiping congregation.

Lent, as a season for reflecting on the life and suffering of our Lord, is an ideal time to take stock of how, or if, we regularly and frequently practice a Sabbath "time out" from our daily routines and "time in" for God.

A good place to begin such reflection is with the example of our Lord, who, though burdened as we are with life's trials, consistently found ways to heed the biblical call: "Be still and know that I am God."

Letters to the Editor

Jesus did not 'self-deliver,' nor should we

I have an answer to a March 1 headline: "Is 'self-deliverance' better than slow death?" (see also related UMR Editorial, March 8).

"Self-deliverance" is very wrong. Jesus did not die with dignity. Crucifixion is the most painful way to die. "Excruciating" means "out of the cross." Jesus did not self-deliver.

Furthermore, there is no such thing as self-deliverance. Only God delivers from death to life. A person cannot save himself or herself.

People must learn to depend on the Lord and His Word only and not on human "wisdom." Christians also need to pray for healing for those who are sick.

Heather Hughes
Georgetown, Texas

I hope there was more

As a certified lay speaker in the California-Nevada conference, I was naturally attracted to Denise Johnson Stovall's article on the second quadrennial meeting on lay speaking in the March 1 issue.

By the time I got to the second column of the piece, I was disappointed. Barbara Thompson's description of Christ is a very weak affirmation:

"Jesus was an upstart layman who claimed to know the will of God. This wandering preacher called together some marginalized people who claimed to be his disciples . . . They built congregations, fed the poor, and challenged political structures. From this lay movement came the powerful movement of Christianity."

Please tell me that Mrs. Thompson's thumbnail sketch was taken out of context, that she went on to offer a more complete picture of our Master.

Robert Hellam
Seaside, California

Work hard for peace

Our government has argued that we seek stability in the Middle East region. If so, then we must work as hard at establishing peace with justice, negotiating all the issues of all concerned just as we did at building a coalition and pursuing this war.

We say we want a "new world order"(a curious choice of phrases by Mr. Bush considering it reportedly was used by Hitler and the Third Reich). Then we should quit selling weapons all over the globe, period. We particularly should not sell them to anyone or any country we cannot guarantee has no designs on power, or who might one day decide to use them on us or our "friends."

Now is the time to take the tremendous energy of the millions of prayers for peace and channel it into the specific actions of the things that make for true peace with real justice.

Rod Saunders
East Bloomfield, New York

I'm hopeful about study

I am looking forward to the results of the study panel on homosexuality (see UMR, Feb. 15).

Based upon some of the articles and correspondence published on this topic, significant debate will result within the Methodist Church. This debate can be done in a healthy, productive manner, which can help further the work of the church at large.

As United Methodists, we are taught to use Scripture, tradition, reason and experience in defining our theological positions.

How do I as a United Methodist weigh the two great commandments to love as given by Jesus in Matthew 22:37-40 and Mark 12:29-31 against some of those contained elsewhere, such as Leviticus 18:22?

Homosexuality is a complex issue. I hope that the study group's efforts will provide some insight.

Tom Zolnerowich
Dallas, Texas

Camp funds questioned

As participants attending the national camp leaders' meeting were shocked, I too, was shocked to read that a donor, befriended by one of the church's camp directors, will contribute $90 million for a national camp, conference, retreat center and to improve conference camp facilities (see UMR, Feb. 15).

Apparently this "strong, new affirmation of camping ministries" is a commitment to spend $90 million to serve ourselves, because nothing is said about plans for greater outreach to all the children, youth, adults and families outside the church.

It's difficult to equate the term "ministries" with a plan to spend $90 million for more luxurious facilities for adults and children who today "have much higher expectations for comfort . . ."

In light of the terrible needs across the nation and the world today, the United Methodist Church must prayerfully consider the terms under which $90 million can be accepted for use in this one area, and how spending the funds—and soliciting for still more—can be justified.

Joanne Dahlberg
Wichita, Kansas

Here I Stand

We must think carefully about people whom we elect to General Conference

By BARBARA WENDLAND

Soon members of every annual conference will elect delegates to General Conference, our United Methodist Church's top policy-making body.

Electing them is a vitally important task, but it is often a hard one for laity because few of us know each other and few have occasion to know how the system works above the local church level.

As a layperson who has been a General Conference delegate, I urge lay members of annual conferences to consider several factors in deciding who to vote for.

Consider overall composition

■ Think about the overall composition of your General Conference delegation. Let it reflect your annual conference's whole membership in terms of characteristics like age, sex and race.

Elect people from all over your geographical area, and be sure that small churches and large ones, and small towns and large cities are represented. Elect some experienced delegates and some new ones.

■ Look at personal qualifications. Find out about potential delegates' involvement and leadership outside the church as well as within it. After all, the world is the main arena in which God calls laity to minister.

■ Look at each potential delegate's relationship to the United Methodist Church. Many church employees and clergy spouses are laity and are unusually well qualified to be delegates. Their full-time involvement with the church makes them well informed and often reflects strong commitment.

Like clergy, most lay church employees and clergy spouses depend on the church for their income and status, so like clergy they have a heavy investment in preserving some aspects of the present system. Lay voters may decide which of these factors they consider most important.

Know how process works

■ Know how General Conference works. It lasts two weeks and meets from early morning until late night every day except Sunday, and delegates need to be present full-time. They need plenty of physical stamina. They need the time, ability, and willingness to read and absorb a lot of written material and to discern God's voice in it, even when God's voice is in viewpoints that challenge familiar ways of doing or thinking.

Delegates need to communicate effectively in a group of nearly 1,000, most of whom are well informed and well prepared. Also, the most effective delegates have contacts beyond their own annual conference.

■ Know how the voting process works. Who you avoid voting for can be just as important as who you vote for. And being present full time is essential. Voting begins when your annual conference opens and continues throughout its sessions.

It's a large order

It's a large order. So if you are a lay member of your annual conference this year, collect information from both clergy and laity.

Find out who your annual conference's lay delegates have been for the past few General Conferences, and which ones have done an especially good job.

Look also for qualified laity who have never served. Then vote carefully.

The future of our church is at stake.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Barbara Wendland is a member of First United Methodist Church of Temple, Texas (Central Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

My Witness

Glorious sunrise warmed me with a vision of Risen Lord

By MICHAEL SWANSON

During the summer of 1978, I was lucky enough to be a part of church-sponsored mission study tour.

One of the most memorable experiences was the time we spent at the Henderson Settlement in Frakes, Kentucky. We had found a secluded spot where we could look out over miles and miles of tree-lined mountains and valleys. Somebody suggested that this would be the perfect spot to watch the next day's sunrise.

Early the next morning, a few of us made the long walk to "our" spot. Our laughter and joking filled the air as we stumbled through the dark. Making ourselves as comfortable as we could on the cold, hard ground, we sat back and waited.

We had planned to read from the Bible, to pray, and maybe sing a few songs. But as the first rays of sunlight started to break through the darkness, we became quiet. A soft breeze rustled the trees.

The misty fog that had covered the valleys slowly began to burn off. As the sun rose higher and higher into the sky, the night chill disappeared, replaced with a gentle warmth. There was no need for words. Nature was saying everything for us.

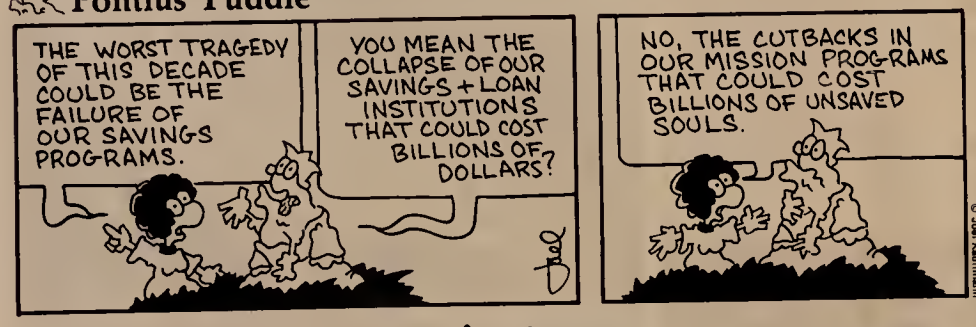
I've often supposed that the first Easter morning sunrise must have been like the sunrise we witnessed in Frakes, Kentucky. As the sun rose to scatter the depths of the darkness, so did the Son rise to bring light to the world, a light that the darkness can never cover up.

It's been almost 13 years since I saw that sunrise at the Henderson Settlement. It wasn't the first sunrise I had seen and, God willing, I'll be able to see many more in the years to come.

But with each sunrise I see, I'll always remember the warmth we shared there and how each of us took back home our own ray of Light from the Risen Lord.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Michael Swanson is a member of Stephens Memorial United Methodist Church in Kansas City, Kans. (Kansas East Annual Conference).

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"The essence of the Gospel [is that] God loves each one of us and wills to be united with each one as a parent with a child. Baptism, especially infant baptism, proclaims that message ... that God loves this child, whose name we speak, even before the child can speak God's name—God knows the child's name and will call the child to God's self in ways we cannot anticipate, at a time we cannot calculate, with a love we cannot understand—until that time when the child says yes and begins the life of faith. That is bedrock in our faith—the Gospel itself."
—The Rev. Mark Trotter to the General Board of Discipleship

* * *

"The pastor who meticulously calculates hours 'worked' so as not to give more than agreed upon will soon see calling diminish into employment. The congregation or parishioner who holds that a pastor performs certain functions for which he or she is paid will lose a minister and gain an employee."
—United Methodist Bishop Woodie W. White, Illinois Area

"The Church will never be at peace until the commitment to God and the Gospel of our Lord take priority over any personal warp to some left or right ideas. People who have a primary commitment to their own opinions and a secondary interest in religion always threaten to destroy the Church. What good reason and right opinion do you have to excuse yourself from the costly practice of the Christian religion?"
—The Very Rev. George Back, dean, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching." (RSV)

Book	Chapter	Verse

(Last week's answer: Revelation 16:16)

Readings for week of March 25

Monday: Psalms 118:19-29
Tuesday: Isaiah 50:4-9a
Wednesday: Psalms 31:9-16
Thursday: Mark 11:1-11
Friday: John 12:12-16
Saturday: Mark 14:1-15
Sunday: Philippians 2:5-11

Welcome to 11,700 readers of newest UMR family member!

With this issue, the Reporter welcome nearly 12,000 readers in Washington, Idaho, Kentucky, Texas and New Mexico to the newest member of our family of publications: ***The United Methodist Record.***

The Record, like the ***Reporter*** and its bi-weekly counterpart, ***The United Methodist Review,*** combines annual conference news, local church news, and national and global religious news into a unique newspaper package.

Three annual conferences—Kentucky, Pacific Northwest and Rio Grande—and two local churches—First UMC in Wilmore, Kentucky and First UMC in Tacoma, Washington—are publishing their own editions of the Record's initial monthly issue.

The editorial philosophy underlying the three publications is identical. We refer to each of them and to the three of them together as UMR. Differences in frequency and available space dictate stylistic differences.

The new publication will follow the same editorial purpose and policies that have guided the Reporter for more than two decades.

The Reporter's purpose, as adopted by its Governing Board, is to report on concerns of the church, to interpret news of the church, and to promote the church's welfare.

The Reporter's editorial statements aim first and foremost to be Christian. At the same time, we seek to be fair to those whose views may differ from ours.

Each issue of UMR also provides opportunities for readers to express their views and concerns. This may be done via Letters to the Editor and a variety of other readers' forum columns.

Taken together, the Reporter and its variations now reach some 460,000 homes nationwide in nearly 400 different editions serving annual conferences, districts, and local congregations.

We trust that our newest communications endeavor, like those that are ongoing, will serve to glorify God and to strengthen the church.

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of UMR."

The United Methodist REPORTER

Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, Editor and Chief Executive
Daniel J. Louis, General Manager
John A. Lovelace, Managing Editor
Donald K. Small, Conference Editions
Stephen L. Swecker, Faith Forum Page Editor
Kay Fielder, Local Editions

Send Correspondence and Address Changes To:
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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Faith watch

ACTIONS DEPLORED: More than 100 religious leaders, including three United Methodist bishops, have called the permanent replacement of striking "New York Daily News" workers "morally unjustifiable and reprehensible." The strike began Oct. 25, 1990. Negotiations are under way for sale of the paper to Robert Maxwell of Great Britain.

LETTERS REQUESTED: United Methodists have been asked to write letters backing a 'Horn of Africa' bill pending in Congress that would provide immediate aid for three countries. As many as 21 million people are at risk of starving to death in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia, according to the U.N. World Food Program. The letter-writing campaign is sponsored by Bread for the World, an ecumenical anti-hunger lobby.

PEACE AWARD GIVEN: The Rev. Glenn F. Smiley of Los Angeles, retired United Methodist pastor, has received the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award from the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Mr. Smiley, 80, is executive director and founder of a recently organized center for non-violence named in honor of the late civil rights leader.

NEW MISSION PARTNERSHIP: A new mission partnership is being formed between The United Methodist Church and Korean Methodist Church. A covenant statement recognizes the primary responsibilities of the United Methodists for mission work in the United States and of Korean Methodists for mission work in Korea and calls for consultation and cooperation in other countries. The United Methodist Church has spread its mission work to 77 countries, while Korean Methodists have placed missionaries in 51 countries. The Rev. Robert Harman, top executive of the Board of Global Ministries' World Division, said the Korean program "represents a very substantial piece of work in world mission."

Robert Harman

EDUCATION GOES ON: Almost all Presbyterian ministers take continuing education courses, according to findings of a recent Presbyterian Panel poll. All but 3 percent of pastors and 16 percent of specialized clergy surveyed reported that they had taken some continuing education in the past five years.

NEW HYMNAL: The board of directors of the Christian Board of Publication (Disciples of Christ) has approved a proposal to fund development of a new hymnal for the denomination. Release of the new hymnal is expected in late 1994. Possibility of producing a new hymnal with the United Church of Christ had been considered, but that idea was abandoned last year.

COUNSELING NETWORK: An informal network to help United Methodist pastors counsel adults who were sexually abused as children has been created through the assistance of the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. National statistics indicate that one of every three girls and one of every seven boys are sexually abused before age 18. Among UM agencies, Global Ministries and Church and Society are working on legislation regarding this issue for the 1992 General Conference and Discipleship has begun new curriculum aimed at child abuse prevention (see UMR, March 15).

Anti-drug resources coming to local churches

Videotape will be first fruit of Pan-Methodist cooperation on drug abuse education

The Rev. C. Fred Smith, shown last fall at A.P. Shaw United Methodist Church in Washington, heads the anti-drug curriculum effort.

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Your local congregation should have "Christ-centered" curriculum within a few months to help people resist drug and alcohol abuse.

That's the word from the Rev. C. Fred Smith, director for resources for an anti-drug project involving four Methodist denominations in the United States.

Dr. Smith, an ordained minister of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, recently was appointed to head the Pan-Methodist anti-drug curriculum program.

The effort is housed at and partially funded by the United Methodist Publishing House on behalf of The United Methodist Church.

Other participating denominations are African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal.

The program is intended to equip local congregations to address substance abuse in their churches and communities, Dr. Smith said recently.

The first resource, a video titled "Revival of Hope," will be unveiled at 1991 annual conference sessions. It has been produced by Larry Tyler-Wayman, a United Methodist and newly appointed editor of substance abuse resources.

The video and subsequent resources for children, youth and adults will be formed around the principles of:

✓ Assessment of local needs and resources.

✓ Awareness of systemic issues such as poverty, racism, morality and lifestyle, that surround substance abuse.

✓ Action—putting the information gained from the curriculum into practice as Christian witness.

A design team prepared curriculum models in October, Dr. Smith added. Prototypes are being tested in Charlotte, N.C., Jackson, Miss., and Nashville.

Although the program encourages cooperation with local governmental and community groups, the curriculum stresses that substance abuse is essentially a spiritual problem, Dr. Smith said.

"This is a Christ-centered program," he asserted. "We are who we are and we aren't going to apologize for it."

Another new anti-drug curriculum, "Born Free/Stay Free," was referred to the Pan-Methodist cooperative program during the Feb. 27-March 3 meeting of the General Board of Discipleship.

"Born Free/Stay Free" is the brainchild of the Rev. J. Richard Gibson, a United Methodist pastor, of Rock Hill, S.C., (see UMR, Oct. 19).

Tested last year in the Oklahoma Annual Conference, it was endorsed for United Methodist anti-drug efforts by Bishop Felton E. May, leader of the Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence.

Bishops' hearings call for more local anti-drug efforts

From news and staff reports

Your United Methodist congregation is being called to commit itself fully to the struggle against drug abuse and violence.

That call was a major theme of the "overwhelming" response to 10 nationwide hearings on drug abuse sponsored March 8-9 by the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence. The initiative is in its second year.

Hundreds of people of all ages and ethnic groups reportedly testified at hearings in Washington, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Oklahoma City; White Plains, N.Y.; Dorchester, Mass; Largo, Fla.; Sandusky, Mich.; and Chiloquin, Ore.

Common calls cited

In addition to the call for greater commitment by local congregations against drug abuse, other common calls at the hearings urged:

■ New patterns of cooperation between church and state to combat the problem;

■ Education and treatment, not more jails, as the answer to widespread drug abuse and the violence that often accompanies it.

"While the findings of the hearing panels raise serious and profound questions on the role the church needs to take, I see great signs of hope and commitment," said Bishop Felton E. May, who continues to head the bishops' initiative against drugs and violence while supervising the church's Harrisburg, Pa., Area.

Bishop May said a "prevailing thread" of the hearings was "the conclusion that the church remains in denial that alcohol and drug addiction are serious problems that we, as Christians, need to confront."

At the same time, the bishop added, "The hearings also uncovered congregations and programs that are successfully dealing with the problem. They offer hope and healing to those who are addicted and work hard to educate non-addicted persons."

Typical of those testifying were participants in Washington, Atlanta, Largo and Chicago.

Experiences offered

At those sessions, public health officials, mental health practitioners, law enforcement officers, pastors, lay people and community workers offered their personal experiences with drug and alcohol abuse and violence.

At the Atlanta hearings, United Methodist Walt West, a police officer and chaplain with the city of Hapeville, Ga., said local congregations generally have been unwilling to become involved in the drug crisis beyond making occasional referrals or donations to treatment programs.

"Basically the churches get in touch and say 'Handle it,'" Mr. West said. "The easiest way to deal with something is to assign somebody to do it for you."

In Washington, United Methodist Christine Dean Kells, senior probation officer for the State of Maryland, testified that "to respond to the cries from the wilderness it will take our government, church, community, private and public sectors working together to solve this devastating problem."

In Florida, a panel headed by Bishop H. Hasbrouck Hughes Jr. (Florida Area) heard an Alabama pastor, the Rev. Mac Larkin, call for:

✓ United Methodist seminaries to implement Christian-based drug abuse education courses;

✓ Annual conferences to establish substance abuse recovery centers;

✓ Annual conferences to establish halfway houses for recovering addicts.

'In for the long haul'

Leigh Kammerer, a chemical dependency program coordinator in Tallahassee, Fla., told the panel: "We're in for the long haul when it comes to treatment, and the problem crosses all racial and economic groups."

In Chicago, witnesses focused on how news media incorrectly portray drug abuse as a problem of the inner city, when it is more likely to be prevalent in the suburbs, said James Watts, hearing coordinator. He is executive director of the Chicago chapter of Black Methodists for Church Renewal.

"Our panel came to two conclusions," Mr. Watts told the Reporter. "One is that the church has a problem identifying with anyone outside the church.

"The other is that the most successful prevention and treatment programs are those which enhance self-esteem, especially among youth. The most successful anti-drug programs in the nation—Alcoholics Anonymous and the Black Muslims—are tied to a very disciplined lifestyle coupled with the essence of spirituality."

Complete results of the hearings are being compiled by Bishop May's office. The compilation is expected to be available in April.

The report will be the basis for legislative proposals on a denominationwide response to drug abuse and violence to be considered at the church's 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

United Methodist News Service; the Rev. Tom Hughes, Florida conference editor of the Reporter; and Associate Editor Cynthia B. Astle contributed to this report.

FLORIDA CONFERENCE PHOTO BY TOM HUGHES

LARGO, Fla.—The Rev. Mac Larkin of Alabama (standing) testifies about drug abuse before a panel headed by Bishop H. Hasbrouck Hughes Jr. (seated behind lectern). This was one of 10 such hearings around the U.S. sponsored March 8-9 by the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence.

Task force: It's 'feasible' to move missions board, but should we? Where?

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

Is it feasible to move United Methodism's General Board of Global Ministries out of New York City?

The 15-member task force assigned to answer that question says "Yes." The answer came from the group's recent meeting in Chicago following two years' study.

Task force chairman W. Randolph Smith of Houston says the two obvious next questions are:

■ Should the church's missions board be moved?

■ If the answer to the first question is Yes, then where to?

He said the task force, created by the church's 1988 General Conference, will consider the "should" question via a telephone conference call in April.

"The other question—the 'where' question—is up for grabs," Mr. Smith told the Reporter. He added, though, that the task force's economic analyses have considered 10 cities, all in the U.S., as possible relocation sites.

He indicated that if the task force gets into the "where" question and attempts to answer it specifically, the task force might narrow its recommendation to two or three cities.

Mr. Smith said the task force is being assisted by the public accounting firm of Price Waterhouse in gathering and analyzing data.

He said additional input at the task force's most recent meeting came from officials of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. That denomination recently moved its headquarters from New York City and Atlanta to Louisville, Ky.

The 15-member group, officially known as the Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Relocating the General Board of Global Ministries Outside New York City, consists of three people from each of the church's five jurisdictional conferences within the U.S.

The final task force meeting will be in late September. The task force will report directly to the church's 1992 General Conference in Louisville.

'Durham Declaration' urges anti-abortion stand

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

Thirty United Methodist church leaders, primarily from the southeast, have called upon church members to reject "our abortion-conducive culture" and to take a "scriptural, theological and pastoral approach" to abortion.

The strongly worded call is part of the recently released "Durham Declaration," a 1,000-word statement on the church and abortion that grew out of talks held during the last 12 months in Durham, N.C.

"Abortion is testing our church today as deeply as slavery tested our church in the 19th century," the statement begins.

It accuses the denomination of making an "insufficient response" to this "test" by being "content to debate abortion with the merely political terms that American society has made available."

By contrast, the Declaration includes nine "promises" that it invites other United Methodists to make.

These "promises," the Declaration indicates, would place concern for abortion more distinctively within the church's mission.

For example, one "promise" states that "we pledge, with God's help, to teach our churches that the unborn child is created in the image of God and is one for whom the Son of God died. . . . So the life of this child is not ours to take.

"Therefore, it is sin to take this child's life for reasons whether of birth control, gender selection, convenience, or avoidance of embarrassment."

> ***"We pledge, with God's help, to teach our churches that the unborn child is created in the image of God and is one for whom the Son of God died. . . . So the life of this child is not ours to take. . . . Therefore, it is sin to take this child's life . . . ."***
>
> **—Durham Declaration**

The document also urges United Methodists "to become a church that hospitably provides safe refuge for the so-called 'unwanted child' and mother."

Although the document pledges to "offer the hope of God's mercy and forgiveness" to women who obtain elective abortions, it contrasts with the church's existing teaching on abortion by giving no indication that abortion is ever a justifiable option for Christians (see accompanying box).

According to the Rev. Paul T. Stallsworth, a United Methodist pastor from Creswell, N.C., and organizer of the discussions that resulted in the Durham Declaration, some 40 United Methodists—lay people, ministers, students and seminary faculty—participated in writing the statement.

Mr. Stallsworth said that, although he believes abortion is always a sin, the document stops short of stating such because the drafters didn't want to "formulate anything that resembles ecclesial laws or ecclesial policy. We think there's room for discussion."

Since being approved by the original 30 signatories, the Declaration has been sent to more than 400 United Methodists, Mr. Stallsworth said. It since has been signed by some 175 other church leaders and members.

Those who have signed the Declaration include Duke Divinity School professors Stanley Hauerwas and Geoffrey Wainwright, retired United Methodist Bishops Ole Borgen, William Cannon, Ralph Dodge and Lance Webb, Drew University Theological School professor Thomas C. Oden, and the Rev. Donald Wildmon, president of the American Family Association.

The Declaration is scheduled to be published in "Christian Social Action," the official periodical of the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society.

UMC's stance on abortion reviewed

This is The United Methodist Church's current stance on abortion:

"Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures."

—1988 Book of Discipline, Paragraph 71G (excerpt)

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

UM SCHOOLS IN 'TOP 50': Four United Methodist-related liberal arts schools are listed among the nation's top 50 in a recently-released publication by the editors of "National Review" magazine. The "National Review College Guide—America's 50 Top Liberal Arts Colleges" includes Birmingham (Ala.)-Southern College; Boston University; Millsaps College, Jackson, Miss.; and Wofford College, Spartanburg, S.C.

MISSION STUDY TRIP: The United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries is sponsoring a mission trip to Japan May 13-31. Participants will visit Tokyo, Hiroshima, Kyoto/Osaka and Okinawa in preparation for the 1992 mission study on Japan.

HISTORICAL GATHERING: The second national United Methodist Historical Convocation will be held June 28-July 1. The event is sponsored by the denomination's Commission on Archives and History in Madison, N.J. Alister E. McGrath—a member of the faculty at England's Oxford University, a lecturer in systematic and historical theology at Wycliffe Hall and the author of 17 books on history and theology—will be the featured speaker.

YOUTH TO GATHER: Entertainment and inspiration will abound at "Youth '91," an event designed for United Methodist senior high youth. The Aug. 5-9 gathering at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo., is sponsored by the churchwide Board of Discipleship and the denomination's National Youth Ministry Organization. Topping the list of entertainers will be the Grammy Award-winning gospel group "Take 6."

Compiled from news and staff reports

Best term for 'racial ethnic' remains elusive

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

CHARLESTON, S.C.—What term should be used by United Methodists when referring to racial ethnic persons in the church?

If you don't have an answer, you're not alone.

A denomination-wide task force has also struggled with that question. The 15-member group hopes to find a proper replacement for the term "racial ethnic minority" and present a recommendation to the church's 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

The Rev. Warren Hill, staff executive for the church's General Commission on Religion and Race, said, "A large number of racial ethnic persons understand that they are a numerical minority in the United States. But due to the history of America and the United Methodist Church, the use of the word 'minority' makes racial ethnic persons feel inferior.

"People don't realize that many ethnic groups perceive the term to be an unacceptable manifestation of racism."

Mr. Hill told the Reporter that after several meetings, the task force determined that a study guide would address one aspect of the problem. The 150-page document is called "Language of Hospitality: Intercultural Relations in the Household of God."

The Rev. Yolanda Pupo-Ortiz, Bethesda, Md., task force chairperson, told United Methodist News Service, "We are giving the church the document it wanted, but we also want them to know that the issue is a lot larger than finding a replacement for the term 'minority' as it refers to racial [and] ethnic people."

Mr. Hill added that United Methodists across the church are encouraged to send written recommendations to the task force, in care of the General Commission on Religion and Race, 100 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D. C. 10002.

Affirmative action values cited

United Methodist News Service

WASHINGTON—Affirmative action, a religious and moral issue, also constitutes good business and political practice, preacher and politician the Rev. Andrew Young told an audience at the United Methodist Building recently.

Dr. Young, who has been a U.S. representative, a U.N. ambassador, Atlanta mayor, and a top leader in the civil rights movement, spoke at a worship service and discussion sponsored by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society.

The meeting was attended by about 40 persons from many civic and religious groups.

A concept of efforts to "admit those traditionally excluded" must be sold on the basis of building for the future rather than respecting the past, he said.

The theme of the gathering, held in cooperation with the Washington interreligious community, grew out of a recent Supreme Court decision in Croson vs. Richmond, Va.

In that case, the court decided that the city's setting aside of 10 percent of city contracts and jobs under affirmative action constituted reverse discrimination.

Dr. Young, a United Church of Christ minister, expressed the opinion that the civil rights laws of the 1960s "would have been impossible without church action."

He credited ministries based at the building, which houses a variety of interfaith social action agencies, for enabling the laws' passage.

Affirmative action "doesn't take anything away from anybody," Dr. Young stressed, because "the more people who are included, the more rewards . . . for all."

He pointed to Atlanta, crediting its recent growth to affirmative action in providing benefits for all and for putting the city "more in touch with the world."

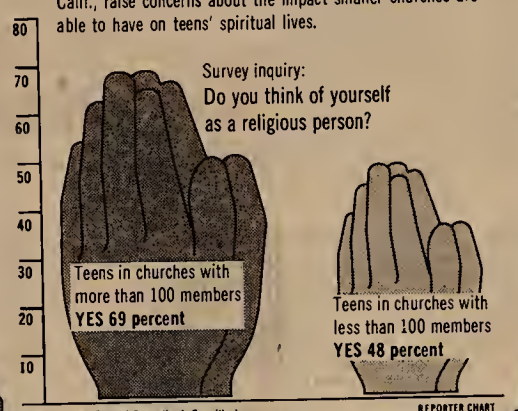
Calling affirmative action "one of the secret weapons" the U.S. economy can use to compete with the rest of the world, he said the United States has the advantage of being a "world in miniature" with its large ethnic and racial population.

Dr. Young rebuffed the Bush administration view of affirmative action as job or enrollment quotas, saying it involves instead goals and objectives. Some method of evaluating change is also essential, he added.

Faith Snapshot (Third of four parts)

How does church size affect teen-agers' religious experience?

Teen ministry in churches of less than 100 members may be considerably less effective than the ministries of larger churches. These findings of a recent study on teen-agers' religious experiences by Barna Research Group of Glendale, Calif., raise concerns about the impact smaller churches are able to have on teens' spiritual lives.



Source: 'Today's Teens: A Generation In Transition' REPORTER CHART

'Making disciples' remains board's goal

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Helping your local congregation be more effective in making disciples for Christ has been at the heart of the past 2½ years for United Methodism's General Board of Discipleship.

Ezra Earl Jones

So said the Rev. Ezra Earl Jones, chief executive of the agency, in a "state of the board" address during Discipleship's recent meeting (see related stories, UMR March 15).

Dr. Jones recounted for the 102 directors the vision set out by the board in 1988:

■ To encourage people to be in relationship to God;

■ To invite people to accept Christ as Savior and Lord;

■ To help people understand, through local congregations, what it means to live daily as a Christian disciple;

■ And to equip people to live as disciples in the world and be accountable for their witness.

Although the 1989-92 quadrennium has more than a year left, Discipleship's efforts have already born fruit, Dr. Jones said.

Among the highlights of Discipleship's efforts he listed:

✓ The "Vision 2000" evangelism program has resulted in a 10 percent increase in worship attendance and 1,700 new members during testing in the Western North Carolina Annual Conference. The program now is ready for distribution throughout the denomination.

✓ Stewardship University was initiated in two sessions in 1990 to educate laypeople and pastors in new models of stewardship.

✓ Class Leaders, a new program for laypeople's spiritual development, will start in May under the direction of Covenant Discipleship.

✓ A specialized field staff for Hispanic constitutents has begun work in five Hispanic population centers around the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

✓ The 10-year-old "Walk to Emmaus" spiritual formation program has been extended to Australia, South Africa and Latin America.

✓ A new level of the Disciple Bible Study has been developed for those who completed the initial Disciple program.

✓ The new United Methodist Book of Worship is well nearing final-draft stages with major input from Discipleship staff and directors (see UMR, March 8).

Dr. Jones noted that the major event for Discipleship during 1988-91 was The International Gathering Oct. 31-Nov. 4 in Fort Worth, Texas.

The agency coordinated the four-day worship and instruction conclave for the Council of Bishops to present its "Vital Congregations/ Faithful Disciples" pastoral letter.

"The Holy Spirit gave us a fresh baptism at the Gathering," Dr. Jones said. "Now we're looking for ways to repeat that over and over in our annual conferences and local congregations."

UMR announces launching of new monthly publication

The UMR family of newspapers has a new offspring: the monthly United Methodist Record.

UMR Editor and Chief Executive Spurgeon M. Dunnam III said the Record's inaugural subscribers include some 11,700 church members in Washington, Idaho, Kentucky, Texas and New Mexico (see related welcome on Page 2).

The tabloid-size Record's content consists of news items, features and opinion page articles digested from the previous month's issues of its weekly parent publication, The United Methodist Reporter.

UMR also publishes a bi-weekly newspaper, The United Methodist Review.

"We are proud to present Volume 1, Number 1 of the newest variation of UMR," Dr. Dunnam stated in a signed welcome to readers of the March 1991 issue of the new publication.

He noted that UMR newspapers taken together reach some 460,000 homes nationwide in nearly 400 different editions that serve annual conferences, districts and local congregations.

"This flexible style makes UMR unique among religious publications and the largest-circulation religious newspaper in the U.S.," Dr. Dunnam observed.

The Record's national pages are edited by the same seven-member writing staff that produces The United Methodist Reporter and The United Methodist Review.

UMR Associate Editor Cynthia B. Astle has been assigned by Managing Editor John A. Lovelace to coordinate the Record's production in addition to her continuing writing and editing responsibilities.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace — Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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A Church On Fire

Letters about the Gathering, from both laity and clergy, have hit my desk like an avalanche.

I am getting reports from all over the Conference that the spirit of the Gathering continued in our congregations through last Sunday's services with baptisms and baptism renewal, communion observances, professions of faith, and several accounts of persons deciding for the ministry.

But the most unusual response came from the Pharr Chapel United Methodist Church in Morgan City. It follows in its entirety:

Pharr Chapel in Morgan City was basking in the glow of the GATHERING BY THE RIVER in Baton Rouge as it met for worship and a follow-up renewal service on Sunday, March 10th.

About forty members of the congregation had been to the GATHERING and a dozen sang in the combined choir. The warmth of the occasion was shared with members of the congregation.

The service at Pharr Chapel on this Sunday was designed to come to the dramatic conclusion with members presenting themselves at the altar for a renewal of their baptism vows. As a part of this "renewal service" Rev. Calvin Lapuyade, pastor, brought the message entitled "Brothers And Sisters — Your Church Is On Fire." The service progressed as planned. However, an unexpected event brought the service to a truly dramatic conclusion. As members departed from the sanctuary, they were greeted by a unit of the Morgan City Fire Department parked beside the church.

During the closing moments of the service in the sanctuary, those attending Children's Church in the Educational Building smelled smoke, evacuated the Educational Building and called the Fire Department. There was little damage since the smoke came from an over-heated light fixture. However, no one could have planned a more dramatic conclusion. Brothers and Sisters, Your Church Is (really) On Fire.

William B. Oden

Holy Grill Serves More Than Food

United Methodists Offer Service to Baton Rouge's Hungry

The Holy Grill, a project to feed people in need sponsored by the Greater Baton Rouge Federation of Churches and Synagogues, celebrated its fourth anniversary on March 15 at Jordan United Methodist Church. Jordan has been the host church since the Holy Grill began operation on March 16, 1987.

The Reverend Jeff Day, Executive Director of the Federation, says that Jordan's involvement is symbolic of the contributions of United Methodists as a whole. Twelve United Methodist congregations out of "about 50 religious groups in all" take turns serving 75-150 people five days a week. Mr. Day says that United Methodists have "been well above average" in their financial support as well. The church also offers additional resources through the Istrouma Metropolitan Methodist Mission where the food is prepared.

The Holy Grill began its work under the ministry of the Reverend Freddie Henderson when he and other members of the Federation sought to find ways for Baton Rouge people to serve others. Appropriately, the project was organized on January 15, 1987, on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday to "continue the dream." Jordan's current minister, the Reverend Clarence L. Hillard, also sees its mission to feed the hungry as the "redemptive arm of the Church and Christ." He says that overall "Jordan's involvement has been very positive" not only for those fed, but for the "spirit-filling" for those who have worked in it.

Scenes from the anniversary celebration of the Holy Grill.

Mr. Hillard also says that the Holy Grill is just the beginning phase of Jordan's service to the community. In keeping with their VISION 2000 Covenant Statement, other programs such as remedial education, health screening, job training, day care and pre-marital family life education may be on the agenda for the future. He believes that the crime rate has already been lowered because of the spirit of communal fellowship that the Holy Grill has encouraged. It's important, he says, to "teach participants dignity, pride, and self-respect" along with "moral and spiritual instructions."

For the anniversary celebration, the Federation paid special tribute to a United Methodist. Mr. Amzy Jackson, who is in charge of the prayer ministry for the Holy Grill, was honored. Mr. Jackson, according to Mr. Day, is a "beloved member of Jordan" who casts an "awesome spiritual spell" upon the ministry. Mr. Jackson opens the meals with prayer and also prays individually for the people involved in the project. He is a very important part of the Holy Grill's success, adds the Federation's director.

Other members present at the anniversary celebration were Rabbi Paul Kaplan of Beth Shalom Synagogue; Mrs. Lynn Bradley of Habitat for Humanity; Dr. Alfred Steward of Jordan; and the Reverend Charles T. Smith, president of the Federation's Board.

Featuring Eddie Fox

Evangelism Conference April 14-15, 1991

Dr. H. Eddie Fox, World Director of Evangelism, the World Methodist Council, and well-known author and speaker, will lead the Evangelism Conference, "The Congregation as Evangelist," April 14-15 at First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

Through his association with the World Methodist Council, Dr. Fox is responsible for leading 15 Regional Secretaries of World Evangelism in developing indigenous evangelism on every continent. The World Methodist Council, an association of churches belonging to the Methodist tradition and representing over 50 million constituents in more than 90 countries, is challenging member congregations to do world evangelization together. As the World Director, Dr. Fox preaches World Evangelism missions, teaches and encourages lay and clergy to be about the ministry of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

The conference is scheduled to begin Sunday, April 14 at 5:30 p.m. when Dr. Fox meets with youth, followed by an evening worship service, and ending with fellowship. Monday, District Secretaries of Evangelism will meet at 7:30 a.m. At 8:30 a.m., there will be registration and breakfast. Dr. Fox will continue to speak during the day until the conference ends at 1:00 Monday afternoon.

Conference registration will include a continental breakfast on Monday, a snack midway through the morning, and lunch Monday afternoon. Hotel accommodations can be made with the Ramada Hotel located on Nicholson in Baton Rouge. Child care will also be available for children, infants through 12 years of age, for participants who register before April 3. There will be a $5 fee for child care for Monday. On Sunday evening, child care will be available free of charge.

A registration fee of $5 (prior to April 3), or $8 if received after April 3 may be sent to the Louisiana Conference Office at 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or First United Methodist Church, 930 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. The check may be made payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference.

World Evangelism and the World Methodist Evangelism Institute are ministries of the World Methodist Council which links together more than 54,000,000 "people called Methodists" in more than ninety countries around the world in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

Through the Institute and World Evangelism, a wide variety of international, regional, and local seminars, missions, and schools on evangelism ministries are held in all parts of the world — training leaders, inspiring the faithful, and equipping witnesses to touch others with God's love as expressed in Jesus Christ.

Rural Pastors' Retreat April 8-9, 1991

This year's Annual "Rural Pastors' Fellowship Retreat" will be held April 8-9 at the Uskichitto Retreat Center located near LeBlanc, Louisiana. Resource leader for the event is Dr. William "Bill" Appleby, Program Council Director for the Mississippi Conference.

Within the Conference Mr. Appleby has served, or is serving, on the Town and Country Commission, Parish and Community Ministries, Equitable Salary Commission, Board of (Ordained) Ministry, Methodist Children's Home Trustees, and the Methodist Senior Services Trustees, just to name a few.

Beyond the Conference, Mr. Appleby has been involved in the work of the SEJ Committee on Program and Leadership Development, Town and Country and Church and Community Ministries, Lake Junaluska Trustees, and General Council on Ministries.

He is a delegate to the 1991 World Methodist Conference in Singapore, has been a delegate to Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference 1964-1984, and was a delegate to General Conference 1984 and 1988.

All rural pastors and pastors of small membership churches are encouraged to attend the retreat. Registration for the event is $5. One CEU will be offered. Registrations should be sent to the Reverend Darryl A. Tate, P.O. Box 297, Kinder, LA 70648. For further information contact the Reverend T. R. Bergeron Sr., OSL, 226 Fort Jackson Street, Belle Chasse, LA 70037; (504) 394-3722.

North Shore District

Annual Spouses Retreat to Take Place

"Living Our Promise" with Scripture from Revelation 21:5 ". . . Behold I make all things new," is the theme for the North Shore District Annual Spouses Retreat which will take place April 5-6 at Camp Istrouma in Greenwell Springs. The retreat will begin on Friday with registration at 5 p.m. followed by a supper furnished by spouses of the North Shore District.

Leading the retreat will be the Reverend John Winn, Director of the Center for Pastoral Effectiveness from the Lake Charles District, and the Reverend Carole Cotton-Winn, Lake Charles District Superintendent.

Those interested in attending are asked to bring toiletries, bed linens, towels, flashlight and Bible.

For further information contact Debbie Faurie at (504) 294-3372, or Mary Lou Blakeman at (504) 626-4187.

TO THE LAITY OF THE CONFERENCE

Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences

Laity delegates to Annual Conference June 3-6, 1991 will be electing six (6) delegates to represent our Conference at General Conference May 5 through May 12, 1992 and eight (8) delegates to represent our Conference at Jurisdictional Conference July 14-17, 1992. (The General Conference delegates attend both the General and the Jurisdictional Conferences as delegates.) Voting will be by ballot at the Annual Conference with a simple majority required for election. All lay members of United Methodist churches in the Louisiana Conference are eligible to be considered for election.

The recent Coordinated Mailing "Coverage" includes a Lay Delegate information form. Mr. Paul White, Conference Lay Leader, suggests that any lay person who is interested in being considered as a delegate might wish to fill in one of the information forms. This, however, is not a requirement for election, but does enable delegates to be more familiar with announced candidates.

Those who are interested can obtain a copy of the form from the local church pastor or lay delegate to Annual Conference. Please return the Lay Delegate information form by April 10, 1991 to Dr. Donald C. Cottrill, Executive Director, Conference Council on Ministries, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Important Notice

Please be advised that 1991 Louisiana Annual Conference housing registration letters will be mailed the first part of April.

Conference Nominating Committee to Meet April 12, 1991

The Conference Nominating Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, April 12, 1991 at First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge. The purpose of this meeting will be to make nominations to fill vacancies on Conference boards, agencies and committees for the upcoming Conference year.

The members of the Conference Committee on Nominations are: Bishop William B. Oden, Mr. Paul White, Mrs. Norma Winegeart, Mr. Boyd Baun, Mr. John Shermer, Miss Buffy Stults, Mrs. Betty Ferrington, Dr. Nancy Carruth, Mr. Steve Wheelis, Mrs. Evelyn Deich, Mr. Bob Sides, Mr. Bill Koonce, Dr. Kirby Vining, Rev. C. Richard Hoffpauir, Dr. George W. C. Calvin, Rev. Carole Cotton-Winn, Dr. Byrl J. Moreland, Rev. Joe W. McClain, Dr. H. Warren Blakeman, Rev. James M. Pool, Dr. L. Ray Branton.

Appointment Change

Following the January Cabinet meeting, Bishop William B. Oden announced the following change in ministerial appointments for the Louisiana Conference.

Debra K. Brazzel (Full Connection), from Dallas Bethlehem Center, Inc., Acadiana District, to Leave of Absence, Acadiana District, effective January 1, 1991.

April Conference Calendar

2-3 Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
4 United Methodist Foundation Trustees Spring Board Meeting, Baton Rouge
5 Board of Ordained Ministry: Material from those recommended for Probationary membership due in Registrar's Office
5-7 United Methodist Women Presidents' Consultation
6 Board of Laity Meeting, First Church, Alexandria, 10:00 a.m.
8-9 Town & Country Retreat, Uskichitto Retreat Center
9 Conference Clergy Golf Tournament, Alexandria Country Club
10-11 Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
12-13 Worship Workshop, First Church, Alexandria
13 United Methodist Women Committee Meetings, David Haas Memorial, Bunkie
14 Native American Awareness Sunday
15 Bishop's Reception for the Legislature, State Capitol, 10 a.m.-noon
15-17 Board of Ordained Ministry: Spring Retreat, Caney Conference Centre
15-17 Christian Education Regional Conference in Oklahoma
16-17 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Tall Timbers
17-18 Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
18-20 National Stewardship Conference, Portland, Oregon
19-20 Workers with Youth Seminar, Maryhill Renewal Center, Pineville
20 CCYM Meeting, First Church, Pineville
20 Conference Council on Ministries Spring Meeting, Broadmoor Church, Baton Rouge, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
23 Consultation with Norman Neaves, Christ Church, Shreveport, 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
25-26 Clergywomen's Retreat, Tall Timbers
26-27 Celebrate & Witness II . . . In Cross Racial Ministry, Dallas (Sponsored by South Central Jurisdiction)
27-May 3 Council of Bishops, Jackson, MS
28 Youth Service Fund Sunday
29-May 1 Board of Ordained Ministry Spring Interviews for Associate Members & Local Pastors (April 29: Ruston, April 30: Lafayette, May 1: Baton Rouge)

Remember

Good Samaritan Offering
Easter Sunday, March 31, 1991
— Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital
— Lafon United Methodist Home
— People's Community Center

The United Methodist REPORTER

FaithLine

Readers voice pros, cons of 'walking out'

The Reporter recently invited readers to call our FaithLine answering machine and tell us whether they agreed or disagreed with the March 15 editorial that raised the question, "Is it OK for Christians to 'walk out' to express dissent?"

Following is a sampling of responses:

Dee Colner, Cocoa, Fla.: Didn't Methodism walk out on the Church of England despite John Wesley? There comes a point when a committee or even the church falls so far away from what the Holy Spirit tells the Christian is right, that one has no other choice but to obey one's conscience.

Winston Richards, Monrovia, Liberia: The business of dissent is inherent. Otherwise we would not be Methodists today. John Wesley would have remained an Anglican. Martin Luther would have remained a Roman Catholic. If you cannot get people to see things your way, you leave. It's not the best way, but normally, it's the only alternative.

Elinor Lewallen, Denver, Colo.: I used to think a relative position on a cause was compromising my faith. Now, being past 70 years of age, my perspective is clearer. I once heard the four temptations of middle life, where at least one of those persons cited in the editorials is in his life journey, are the perfect church, the perfect creed, the perfect character, the perfect faith. One who walks out is operating on that value level and thus has some more growing in faith to do. Besides, those people were given the honor of being selected to serve in those positions and took the place of others who could have seen the commitment through to completion.

Phil Shriver, Foster, Ore.: When the officials of the church depart from scriptural teachings in pursuit of their personal agenda, we're given no alternative in today's church but to leave. This could be changed if membership were given access to a recall procedure, but it's unrealistic to expect members to sit back and accept positions which they find contrary to Scripture.

Mary Catherine Miller, La Center, Ky.: I think eventually one has to break the ties. I tried to stay in the Methodist Church for years. I did everything possible. But I could see that winning souls was not our priority, it was other things. I worked and worked, but could not change anybody's minds, so I finally decided I must leave and find some place where people believed as I do that winning souls to Christ should be our priority. The other social issues then fall in line.

Nancy Stafford, Rockville, Md.: I believe that Christians should not walk out to express dissent; however, they need a valid way to tell what their opinion is. In the cases in the editorials, I think the men did not want their names on something they didn't endorse. However, U.S. Supreme Court justices have a way of dealing with this when they give a majority opinion. Dissenting opinions are also recorded and published, so in that way, they are not required to put their names on something they don't agree with. The United Methodist Church could do likewise, especially on these issues that people feel very strongly about. That way the people involved would feel that their opinion had been honestly written down and heard. That would be a good thing for our church.

Jerry McNair, Aurora, Ill.: When the church embraces false doctrine, we are called by God at some point to "come out," according to Revelation 18:4. It's obvious that many faithful believers worshiping as United Methodists are hearing God's call today. Let's face it, most of us didn't join the church to train our children to walk down the path that leads to damnation.

Glen Sites, Webster Groves, Mo.: When you walk out, you forfeit all effort to change anything. Walking out is not the way to get anything done.

Hazle Easterling, Bryan, Texas: Walking out because of doctrine or practices contrary to biblical teachings may be necessary. If a new path is taken by the church that I believe is wrong, after diligently researching the Scriptures, for me to remain would be a sin. It will be well for us to remember that apostasy begins where the Bible ends.

Ed Middlekauff, Easton, Pa.: Yes, Christians should walk out on Christians whenever they truly believe they are removing themselves from secular ideologies masquerading as a democratic forum in a task force. Walking out points to frustration, but more important, it shows where many in our denomination are heading. I believe the Council of Bishops should declare both task force units null and void and then start over, just like a mistrial. And then ask each member of that mistrial to supply a personal report as to why they voted the way they did.

Howard Wiggins, Millington, Tenn.: I think it's a disgrace that someone who represents traditional Christianity should be a minority of one person. The church's left-wing bureaucracy has never dealt with differing opinions at all. Walking out unfortunately, has become the only way to get the church to pay attention and honestly listen to us with a little respect.

Lorena Gahbert, Camden, Ill.: We are in the process of walking out of our United Methodist Church which I have attended for 61 years. I do not believe that our Methodist church is anywhere near the church that John Wesley started. We disagree strongly with the beliefs of our minister. After talking with him and the district superintendent, is there anything else but to walk to another church. I believe that my beliefs are so far from what the United Methodist Church believes that I have to worship where we share similar beliefs. I've tried to be heard, and the only other way I know of is to walk out.

Jim McConnell, Freeport, Texas: Certainly we sense that as Christians we're called to deal patiently and lovingly with one another, and breaking off ties and walking out sometimes amounts to throwing in the towel or giving in to the side with which we disagree. As Christians we have to associate with other folks of whom many times we do disagree. But I think your editorial overlooked dealing with the difficult notion expressed by St. Paul. What are the situations when Christians' appropriate response is to not associate with those who practice certain kinds of immorality while calling themselves Christians? Is there a danger that in the name of tolerance we lose our standards of conduct?

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY STEPHEN L. SWECKER

These protesters at the recent World Council of Churches assembly in Canberra, Australia, are Christians who, in effect, "walked out" on other Christians to express dissent. Readers expressed mixed views about Christians breaking ties with other Christians.

Editorial

Making impact on the church

"Others in the church are able to make their voices heard on important matters. Why can't I?"

Fair question—and, we suspect, one asked by many Christians who are concerned about the future of their church but who feel powerless to make themselves "heard" on issues that matter to them.

Such people may well look with awe and/or envy at the recent "Durham Declaration" (see UMR, March 22).

Via a combination of an important issue (abortion), a sense of urgency, keen organizational skills, and media savvy, a relatively small group of people succeeded in getting a wide hearing for their views.

We affirm such efforts by thoughtful Christians to lift their voices and extend their influence on critical issues affecting the church and society. They perform a service for the Body of Christ that merits encouragement and support—whether or not we agree with all their views.

Explicitly or implicitly, such efforts:

- Energize individual and corporate attempts to think and act distinctively as Christians.
- Invite others to dialogue and partnership in the discernment of God's will; and,
- Promote the search for consensus on complex and potentially divisive spiritual and moral issues.

The need and opportunity are there, but how can an individual or small group of Christians play that role with maximum impact? Particular circumstances need to be considered in developing a plan of action, including answers to the following questions:

✓ **What is the desired outcome?** A clearly defined purpose and goal makes it more likely that others will understand our intentions and know how to assess them.

✓ **What is the intended audience?** Addressing the entire church obviously requires an approach different from that needed to address a Sunday school class.

✓ **What about timing and frequency?** A concern that's raised only once and far ahead of a board meeting or annual conference session is less likely to be heard than one that's raised more than once nearer the meeting time.

✓ **What's the best medium?** Photographs showing shabby living conditions in the neighborhood around the church may be a more effective way to be "heard" than only using words.

Every United Methodist should recognize that a wide variety of opportunities and methods are available to voice one's concerns.

They include:

- written or verbal petitions (to one's local church administrative board, annual conference or General Conference);
- resolutions or declarations (on particular issues or concerns);
- one-on-one dialogue; and
- letters (to one's pastor, district superintendent, bishop, church newspaper editor)—to name a few.

With our denomination's 1992 General Conference just a year ahead and delegates to be elected at this year's annual conferences, this is a particularly opportune time to raise issues of churchwide concern.

As we pursue issues, we also should recall a spiritual truth about the grounding of such efforts: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Letters to the Editor

WCC 'hijacking' article criticized, commended

We write first to compliment and thank you for the excellent coverage of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia (see UMR, Feb. 15, 22, and March 1).

The stories by Stephen Swecker were comprehensive, accurate and insightful. They showed the tensions and challenges facing the WCC and the member churches.

Unfortunately, the March 8 story by Diane Huie Balay headlined, "Was WCC 'hijacked'?" is distorted and simply false. We cannot believe that the two speeches reported by Ms. Balay, Bill Dale's and Stephen Swecker's, intended to link the ecumenical visitation with a singular effort on the part of U.S. delegates to manipulate the agenda of the assembly so that it was dominated by the Gulf war.

The staff of the WCC (well before the reported "ecumenical visitation") as well as church leaders from many parts of the world contributed to drafting the agenda and placing such importance on the Gulf war. Every event and newspaper in the world was dominated by the Gulf war! To claim the focus was due to U.S. church leaders is preposterous.

We are sorry to see you report a story of discussion and speculation among United Methodist Reporter editors as headline news inevitably confused with the carefully and well-reported stories of the Assembly itself.

William Boyd Grove
Charleston, W.Va.
and
Bruce W. Robbins
New York, New York

'Hijackings' compared

Yes, the World Council of Churches was "hijacked" by a group of peace advocates (see UMR, March 8), much the same as the United Nations was "hijacked" by George Bush into going into war.

But who do you think will have to account more for their hijacking?

David M. Ganett
Barlow, Kentucky

'Hijack' thesis affirmed

As an official delegate of the United Methodist Church to the World Council of Churches Seventh Assembly, I was particularly interested in the March 8 article headlined, "Was WCC 'hijacked'?"

Whether it is fair to attribute the assembly's almost single-minded preoccupation with the Persian Gulf War to the determination of a particular group of American church leaders to play out their differences with the U.S. government on the world stage is debatable. There were others equally determined to do so.

It is not debatable to say that the Persian Gulf situation dominated everything. Perhaps that was inevitable and understandable. Even during the assembly, however, there were strong voices from other parts of the world—the Baltics, Africa, Latin America—protesting the lack of attention to other critical problems.

I think the article's most telling observation was the one reported by Stephen Swecker, that "the world meeting had been orchestrated by U.S. church leaders." There is real truth to this, and it was not confined to public policy issues.

In fact, Mr. Swecker's analysis about the dominating presence of U.S. church leadership could be applied to worship and theology as well as public issues. The predominance of certain American approaches to theology and worship brought forth concern from many participants that the WCC was too willingly accepting a Christian vision that was liberal, secular and Western.

We in the United States are exporting our internal theological battles along with our ubiquitous television and movies. We don't have any more patience for those with whom we disagree on theology than for those with whom we disagree on public policy.

We have also not been sufficiently understanding of the truly desperate concerns of women in non-Western meetings. Mr. Swecker's hijacking thesis therefore goes well beyond the Gulf war. The resulting tensions emphasized differences among Christians rather than common bonds.

The WCC needs to assert again its primary concern for unity. I do not mean one institutional church. I don't know of anybody thinking in those terms. The goal of unity has to do with mutual recognition in baptism, eucharist and ministry.

This goal will require true ecumenicity. For us in the old mainline, this means a willingness to hear vital Christian voices who do not share our self-satisfied assumptions.

Dennis M. Campbell
Durham, North Carolina

What others are saying

"When you see people who want to serve Christ, your job is to enable them to be more fully and better prepared, not to say they can't make it. Our concern should be how we can help them to be what God wants them to be."

—The Rev. Randolph W. Nugent, Jr., General Board of Global Ministries

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: 2 Timothy 4:2)

Readings for week of April 1

Monday: Psalms 118:14-24
Tuesday: Psalms 119-1-8
Wednesday: Acts 10:34-43
Thursday: Isaiah 25:6-9
Friday: John 20:1-18
Saturday: Mark 16:1-8
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

NEW APPROACH: The president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary has called for a "new approach" to resolving the problems, including declines in enrollment and threats to its accreditation, that have plagued the school since conservatives took it over in 1987. But in making the appeal to trustees at the school in Wake Forest, N.C., President Lewis A. Drummond did not propose specific steps. His main emphasis, repeated in a telephone interview with Religious News Service, was that the seminary needs to establish its "theological and financial integrity" in the minds of Southern Baptists.

RESTRICT ABORTION: A proposed teaching statement under consideration by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America says there can be "sound reasons" for aborting a fetus but that strict limitations should be placed on abortions after a fetus is capable of living outside the womb. The statement, approved recently by the denomination's Commission for Church in Society, will be circulated throughout the church for review. It will be submitted for final action to the church's Churchwide Assembly during its Aug. 28-Sept. 4 meeting in Orlando, Fla. Abortion may be considered a "morally responsible act," according to the statement, in cases where: * Continuation of a pregnancy presents a clear threat to the physical life of the woman; * Extreme abnormalities of the fetus will result in severe suffering and early death; * A pregnancy occurs as a result of sexual intercourse in which both parties did not participate willingly, particularly in cases of rape and incest.

TARGETS RESPOND: Spokespersons for the S. C. Johnson and Pfizer companies say they are "disappointed" that the firms have been targeted for a boycott by Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLeaR-TV). The spokespersons said the firms have made attempts to avoid advertising on television programs the CLearR-TV group finds offensive. The firms' comments came in response to an announcement by the coalition of approximately 1,600 Christian leaders, including the heads of more than 70 denominations, that the companies had been targeted for a boycott because of their sponsorship of "prime-time network TV sex, violence and profanity."

ATTENDANCE RISING: Average worship attendance is increasing in United Church of Christ congregations in New England, a development that has helped stem a membership decline throughout the denomination. The six-state conferences in New England increased an average of three worshipers per church at the end of the last decade, moving from 109 in 1987 to 112 in 1989. The figures do not mean the church as a whole is growing in membership. Figures for other regions in the country are up only slightly, remained even, or are off a bit, said Bill Winslow, a church spokesman in New York. "What you can say is that we're slowing up the numbers of members lost. You have to stop the runaway train first."

Compiled from news and staff reports

Faith and genetics meet at a crossroads

Church task force attempts to fashion theological response to genetic engineering

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—What guidance should a local pastor give if a couple being counseled for marriage reveals plans to change the genetic makeup of a child even before its conception?

That question arose in mid-March during a report of the United Methodist Genetic Science Task Force to the church's General Board of Church and Society.

The task force, authorized by the church's 1988 General Conference, is one attempt to help pastors and the entire church meet prophetic needs accompanying the revolution in genetic research and technology, said the Rev. Kenneth L. Carder of Knoxville, Tenn., task force chairman.

Dr. Carder, pastor of Church Street United Methodist Church in Knoxville, told the board, "We spent considerable time sharpening our theologicial perspective. Our unique contribution as a church on genetic issues is rooted in our theological grounding, not in our theological expertise."

The report acknowledges the potential positive uses of genetic science for addressing critical problems such as disease, food supply and safe environment.

But it also warns of potential dangers of the abuses of genetic technologies, such as couples' determining the genetic makeup of a child before conception.

Among task force recommendations are:

- Greater public funding of genetic research and greater accountablity to the public;
- Support for genetic therapy which does not produce changes in the patient's offspring;
- Protecting the confidentiality of genetic information except for compelling circumstances;
- Keeping genes (human, plant, animal) be held as common resources and not be exclusively controlled or patented;
- Access to genetic counseling for all persons;
- Opposition to discriminatory use of genetic information, such as limiting, denying, or terminating insurance or employment on the basis of genetic testing.

The task force also recommended changes in the United Methodist Social Principles regarding the church's official stance on genetic science.

The genetic task force has had eight hearings in seven locations across the country. Testimonies were presented from scientists, theologians, ethicists, bio-tech company executives, farmers and persons affected by genetic diseases.

Dr. Carder told the Reporter that the committee welcomes additional resources for the task force's report. The final draft will be presented to the Church and Society board at its fall meeting in Puerto Rico.

The resolution in its final form will be forwarded to the 1992 General Conference—the church's lawmaking body—meeting in Louisville, Ky.

U.N. official says faith groups aid worldwide human rights efforts

Reporter Staff Special

UNITED NATIONS, New York—"The fact that religious groups like United Methodists have been clamoring for human rights and disarmament helps win major battles in the United Nations struggle for human rights."

That observation came recently from Bertrand C. Ramcharan, chief assistant for the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in remarks to elected members of The United Methodist Church's top social action agency.

"If the United Nations is to succeed, the driving force has to come from groups like you," he added.

During its spring meeting in mid-March, the General Board of Church and Society took a break from its usual sessions and spent a half-day at the United Nations.

During the presentation, Dr. Ramcharan, a native of Guyana, stressed to board members that the vitality of the United Nations comes from its constituency.

For nearly 46 years, staff of the Church and Society board and the former Women's Division of Christian Service (now the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries) have had a relationship with the United Nations.

That relationship began during the 1945 organizational conference of the United Nations in San Francisco. The strategic location of the United Methodist-owned Church Center for the United Nations, directly across the street from the U.N. building in New York, helps to maintain close working ties.

Dr. Ramcharan listed several recent achievements of the U.N., such as facilitating the independence of the southwest African country of Namibia last year.

"The fact that people have an opportunity to govern themselves in different parts of the world, to have their own faith, and to have their own society through the work of United Nations has shown how it has transformed the world since 1945," he said.

The United Nations continues to ask governments in the international community to respect other governments, and the U.N. has basic standards to test compliance with that code.

"You will tell me straight away that it doesn't work," said Dr. Ramcharan. "But I say, this makes it harder for a state to do illegal behavior."

The most recent example of illegal behavior, he said, was the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

"Here you had a case where a fundamental rule had been broken—a country had been swallowed up by another. The security council performed well in this situation. The question now is: 'Will it rest on its laurels or will it drawn on this experience?'

"Will cooperation now be shown in other areas? Will the member countries say 'I care about my neighbors' other issues?' "

He said history must judge the outcome and United Methodists must continue to monitor the results.

—*DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL*

CHURCH AND SOCIETY PHOTO BY LEE RANCK

UNITED NATIONS, New York—A U.N. tour guide shows a wall of maps to General Board of Church and Society directors (from left) Donna Boe of Pocatello, Idaho; Brenda West of Warrensburg, Mo.; and John Dicken of Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Social-action agency calls for justice in Middle East

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—United Methodism's social action agency has called on the United Nations to "bring God's justice and mercy to the Middle East region."

The board also has called for United Methodists to give aid to the suffering peoples of the Middle East.

During reflections on the ending of the Persian Gulf War, members of the General Board of Church and Society said they recognize with appreciation recent initiatves taken by the United States to meet with representatives of the people of Palestine and other Middle Eastern countries.

Board members urged continuation of those initiatives as "vital steps in solving the problems of the Middle East."

This, the board said, includes initiatives by the U.S. government toward a Palestinian state.

During its meeting at the United Methodist-owned Church Center for the United Nations, directly across the street from U.N. headquarters in New York, the board also called upon U. S. leadership to:

- Allow the Iraqi people to determine their own leadership without covert or overt intervention from other countries, including the supply of arms and other resources to any faction within Iraq or with Kuwait;
- Refrain from the sale of arms to Middle East countries beyond those weapons minimally needed for self-defense, to decrease the possibility of another war in the region and allow for increased financial support for domestic social needs;
- Initiate and develop an internationally sponsored conference working for sustainable peace, justice and security, with participation by all Middle East nations, including the Palestinian people.

Finally, the board "calls upon the membership and agencies of the denomination to continue to seek to follow the example of Christ and to give long-term aid to the peoples in the Middle East who suffer as a result of recent and long-term hostilities."

It was noted that church-related relief efforts would be done in cooperation with the Middle East Council of Churches.

PHOTO BY ROBERT STRAWN

UMW petitions garner 57,000 signatures

WASHINGTON—Ressie Mae Bass, vice president of Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, stands with a banner before a group of United Methodist Women holding bound copies of petitions calling for peace in the Persian Gulf. The petitions containing 57,000 signatures were given to an aide to Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell (D-Maine). The petitions urge support for an international Middle East peace conference under United Nations auspices. Copies of the petitionary statement are being sent to President George Bush, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

UM preaching professor denounces common abuses of sermon-stealing

Religious News Service

When is the use of another person's ideas in a sermon plagiarism?

Virtually everyone condemns the dishonest use of someone else's material, particularly if it is done by a minister. But not everyone agrees about what conditions make a pastor's use of other sources unethical.

The Rev. Eugene L. Lowery, professor of preaching at United Methodist-related Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo., offers some guidelines in an article in the March-April issue of "The Christian Ministry," published in Chicago.

According to Dr. Lowery, pulpit abuses of someone else's material include:

- Preaching an entire sermon one has heard or read;
- Using another's sermonic process or outline;
- Quoting another's evaluation of a literary work as if it were one's own;
- Relating someone else's personal experience as if it were one's own;
- Claiming as one's own a revelatory insight or idea gleaned from another's work;
- Using a "pithy phrase or powerful semantic turn borrowed from someone else."

All these have one thing in common, Dr. Lowery writes, in that "listeners hear them as the original work of the one in the pulpit, but they are not. Whatever the motive or need that gave rise to their use, they are forms of plagiarism. In an academic setting such plagiarism could lead to a student's failure or expulsion."

Dr. Lowery acknowledges that "often our use of others' ideas is inadvertent. Our mind will soak up a way of saying something, so that the idea comes out in someone else's language."

According to Dr. Lowery, the use of printed sermons that are published as pulpit helps is unethical even though they are intended to be used in this way.

When a preacher preaches on a text, he says, "the congregation has every reason to expect that we have seriously engaged that text, issue or theme, and are ready to share our reflections. When we substitute purchased sermons for that personal reflection, we betray people's time and trust and our own integrity."

Eugene Lowery

ST. PAUL UMC ACCEPTING applications for full-time Director Christian Education. Congregation — 1000 plus membership. Undergraduate degree required, Christian education or related field desired. Salary negotiable with established benefits. Resume with references to: Julian Lazar, pastor, Post Office Box 5446, Florence, SC 29502.

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LITTLETON, COLORADO — Littleton UMC searching for Minister of Music. Responsibilities include expanding graded vocal and bell choirs, choral and instrumental work and development of fine arts program. Contact: LUMC, 1313 W. Shepperd Ave., 80120.

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DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES and Program Ministries needed at growing suburban church in Dallas area. Send resume with references to Walter Zimmerman, Pastor, FUMC, P.O. Box 850093, Mesquite, Texas, 75185.

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DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY: Saint Stephen United Methodist Church, Amarillo, Texas, is seeking a full-time lay or ordained person for youth, college, young single, plus additional pastoral opportunities. Large program with 80+ active youth. Send resume to: Rev. Jim W. Smith, 4600 South Western, Amarillo, Tx. 79109 (806) 355-7271.

WANTED: PROJECT DIRECTOR for the new McDowell Mission Project of the United Methodist Church, West Virginia Annual Conference. Position available July 1, 1991. Applicant should have a strong Christian commitment to mission in rural Appalachia. Applicant should be familiar with and able to direct the four-fold emphasis of the project: 1) Spiritual Empowerment, 2) Housing Rehabilitation, 3) Education and Leadership Development, and 4) Health Care. Skills needed include programming, office management, and public relations. An Equal Opportunity employer. Resumes and inquiries made to: The Rev. Greg Blair, Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 400 Gary, West Virginia, 24836.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

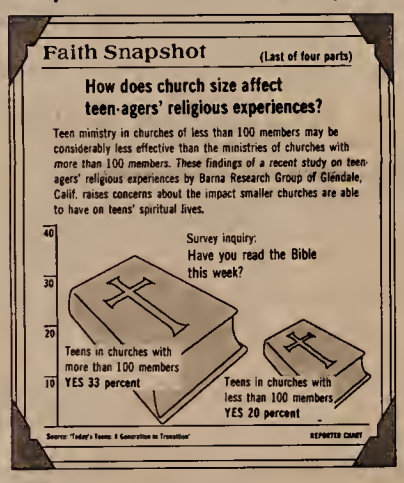
CHANGE PROPOSED: Annual conference lay leaders voted at their recent national association meeting to ask the church's 1992 General Conference to allow local church nominating committees to elect their own chairpersons, according to "Newscope," the weekly newsletter from the United Methodist Publishing House. Currently the church's Book of Discipline mandates that each local church nominating committee must be chaired by the pastor in charge. An effort to change the rule was narrowly defeated by the 1988 General Conference.

LEADERS FEATURED: Three United Methodist leaders are among five "voices in today's religious dialogue" featured in a recent series by the "Christian Science Monitor." Profiled were the Rev. William Willimon and Dr. Stanley Hauerwas of Duke University Divinity School and the Rev. James Wall, editor of "The Christian Century" magazine.

SEPARATE POSITION: The position of deacon should be a distinct form of ordained ministry, says the United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. Citing what they say is ecumenical consensus, commission officials offered the statement in response to a proposal from the committee studying the United Methodist ministry that deacons should be consecrated to a permanent order but not ordained. Both deacons and elders should be distinct forms of ordained, representative ministry, the ecumenical officials said, but ordination as a deacon should not be a prerequisite for ordination as an elder. United Methodism is the only mainline American denomination which requires such a two-step process.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTS: The Rev. Robert H. Conn, executive of the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's Division of Higher Education since 1982, will leave the agency June 1. He will join the faculty of United Methodist-related Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, N.C.

Compiled from news and staff reports



'Most influential Hispanics' list includes UMs

Physician and educator cite religious faith, community service as keys to their success

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

Two Hispanics identified among the "most influential" in this country say that experiences among people of faith helped shape their lives.

"How anybody could get through the kind of background that I bring, without faith, I don't know," said Dr. Catalina E. Garcia, an anesthesiologist in Dallas, Texas, who attends Lovers Lane United Methodist Church.

"Hispanic Business," a magazine published in Santa Barbara, Calif., in a recent issue said Dr. Garcia was one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in the U.S.

The magazine similarly cited David Ochoa—a lawyer, educator, writer and television/film producer.

Catalina Garcia

David Ochoa

Serves university

For three years Dr. Ochoa has been vice president for university relations at United Methodist-related Alaska Pacific University. He also is a lay worship leader at the small Girdwood United Methodist congregation about an hour outside Anchorage.

Both express a keen sense of responsibility to be of service.

Dr. Garcia says, "It was by the grace of God that a poor Hispanic woman finished medical school when it was not in vogue."

Her degrees are from the University of Texas and that university's Southwestern Medical School.

She says, "I would not be where I am today if good Methodist people had not reached out to me in my poverty in the housing projects in El Paso many years ago and if a Jewish couple later had not believed in me and loaned me the money to get through medical school."

They 'knocked on doors'

She says that because Methodists at the Houchen Center in El Paso "knocked on doors and invited the neighborhood children to pre-school there" she "learned English and to play the tambourine and to drink milk and eat crackers and to take a nap. . . and in their Headstart program I learned how to learn!"

Because she learned how to learn, urged on by her parents "who understood so very clearly how their lack of formal education handicapped them in this wonderful country of opportunity," her four sisters have also been to college and their brother is a physician in Fort Worth, Texas.

She was salutatorian

As salutatorian of her high school class, Dr. Garcia was "going to go from high school to working in a dime store, where I'd been working since I was 14."

One of her teachers, learning of her plans, "convinced the teachers' association to buy my books so I could go to college."

Yes, she says firmly, "I am a social activist. It's through the grace of God that I'm where I am, and I don't deserve it. Knowing that gives my life a lot of direction and meaning.

"And I don't want to sound too serious," she says with a laugh, "because I'm getting a bang out of my community work. It's fun to help people.

"With God's help I'll get to keep helping people and having more and more fun doing it!"

Having fun in his work is a hallmark for Dr. Ochoa, too.

For four years in Nashville he was an associate of the chief executive of the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Previously he headed Buenavision Cable TV in Los Angeles. Before that he won two Emmys at New York's WNBC-TV.

He had executive production roles in two major commercial films, "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez" and Robert Redford's "The Milagro Beanfield War."

Dr. Ochoa "grew up in a kind of rough neighborhood of East L.A." in a migrant farmworker family of 15.

But, he says, "my parents were good church role models. My father served as a lay pastor, too."

Dr. Ochoa has an undergraduate degree from California's Whittier College and a law degree from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Although career-focused—"I don't want to be just the best Hispanic at my work, I want to just be the best!"—Dr. Ochoa speaks of the importance of "returning some of the goodness I've received back to the church and the world."

LOUISIANA CONFERENCE PHOTOS

Louisiana 'Gathering' draws 11,000

BATON ROUGE, La.—Inspired by the denominationwide "International Gathering" held last fall, the Louisiana Annual Conference held its own such event, "Yes, We'll Gather at the River," recently on the banks of the Mississippi. Above, a procession of banners opens the gathering, which drew 11,000 participants to Baton Rouge's Centroplex convention center. At right, a member of Jefferson United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge displays his congregation's banner. A report described Louisiana's "Gathering" as "part old-fashioned revival, part new-covenant service, part evangelistic commission and wholly a joyous celebration of the life of the church."

Upper Room devotional guide to begin Soviet edition this fall

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

The Upper Room, the devotional guide published by the United Methodist Church, will soon be distributed in the Soviet Union.

"All of a sudden, the doors opened," Janice T. Grana, world editor of the interdenominational devotional guide, told the Reporter.

This is the first time The Upper Room has been allowed to be distributed in that country, she said.

The door opened through efforts of United Methodist Bishop Hans Vaxby (Northern Europe Area) of Helsinki, Finland, who contacted The Upper Room about the possible edition.

The Soviet edition in the Estonian language is scheduled to begin with the November-December 1991 issue.

"All of a sudden, the doors opened."
—Janice T. Grana

Estonia is a Soviet republic in which churches have remained open throughout the Communist era. This northernmost Baltic republic is the site of 14 United Methodist congregations.

A commitment has also been made to begin production of a Russian language edition within the next year, Ms. Grana said.

The Upper Room has 63 editions in 43 languages.

Ms. Grana said the Estonian-language edition of the daily devotional guide will be translated in the Soviet Union and will be printed through the offices of Bishop Vaxby in Finland.

Copies will be shipped to the Estonian United Methodist Church for distribution.

Ms. Grana says the Estonian church is remarkable.

"In its 83 years, this church has experienced tremendous struggles," she said. After World War II "there were only 40 members, but today they number approximately 2,000 persons."

For many years the church had little printed material of any kind, she said, "not even hymn books.

"Most of their training and teaching has been passed on by oral tradition, but they are longing for resources for their church members and to use in evangelistic outreach.

"This is a special time for them."

Further expansion of Upper Room editions into Eastern Europe is possible, Ms. Grana added. She plans to visit Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

War taxed Arabic version

Production of the Arabic-language edition of The Upper Room was severely tested during the Persian Gulf War, World Editor Janice T. Grana recently told the Reporter.

Cancelled flights into and out of the Middle East and related supply problems prevented distribution of that edition in any country except Egypt, where it is printed.

Before the war, the Arabic-language Upper Room was circulated in the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Sudan and Syria as well as Egypt, Ms. Grana said.

The edition began in 1951 in Beirut, Lebanon, she said, but civil war in that country caused it to be moved to Cairo, Egypt.

"The Arabic edition has endured numerous hardships, primarily because of instability in the Middle East," she said.

"However, there continues to be a demand for this edition by persons of the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox faiths. Circulation for the Arabic edition remains steady at 3,000 copies each issue."

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

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CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

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Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
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Gathering Responses

Responses from the Gathering are still pouring into my office. I want to share just a few with you:

The Gathering on March 9 was the greatest experience in my ministry. I am *renewed!* Pastor

Everyone I talk to is enthusiastic about our church. The Gathering made me proud to be a United Methodist. Layman

Our Council on Ministries met last night and after a lively discussion of the Gathering, asked me to write a word of appreciation to those who organized the event. It was a moving and challenging experience for all who participated. Pastor

We had 34 from our church to attend and each shared something special on the way home. Our chartered bus gave us plenty of good fellowship and reflection time. Pastor

It seemed like a host from heaven touched those who came and my wife and I have been blessed further by what we saw and heard. Layman

The Gathering was even better than we expected!! We've been in prayer for weeks that God's spirit would pour out in abundance on all those participating in this special service were super! The preaching, the music, the liturgy, the fellowship . . . and the list goes on . . . A local church prayer group

Saturday's celebrations were superb! One can't put them out of one's mind: surely the Conference, and all of us individuals, will decide and act in the glow of that day, for years to come! Pastor/Educator

I have just returned from the Gathering and wanted you to know from a participant's viewpoint the day was outstanding. Laywoman

This event began a great awakening in Louisiana. Pastor

The preceding week had been an endless series of hastily-scheduled appointments, running from here to there and everything else that goes along with a pastoral ministry multiplied to the tenth power. I approached Baton Rouge with a gnawing sense of being unsure exactly what the Gathering was going to be like or what it was going to do to me personally. It was a powerful, refreshing, cathartic experience, Bishop and this carried over into worship the next morning. At the end of the service when I asked those who desired to come forward to renew their baptismal covenant, practically everyone in the church came forward. And 17 persons were baptized into the Christian faith. Pastor

Next year: The Superdome and 50,000!
A note on the kitchenette door of the Conference Headquarters Building

I have waited and prayed for thirty years or more to see and feel and sense what happened in the Centroplex on Saturday. To be quite honest, I came there with some very real reservations and fears . . . "O, you of little faith" fits me like a glove! Retired Pastor

William B. Oden

Bishops' Appeals for Philippine Earthquake and Emergency in Liberia

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary responses. To respond to the critical needs of the churches and the peoples of the Philippines and Liberia, two church wide bishops' appeals have been approved by the United Methodist Council of Bishops. They are the Bishops' Appeal for the Philippines Earthquake and the Bishops' Appeal for the Emergency in Liberia. This is the first time in the history of the church that two simultaneous bishops' appeals have been issued. The needs are massive in both countries.

Lifesaving support is needed for the people of Liberia, involved in a war since December 1989. Many are feared dead, and thousands of others are displaced, hiding, living in fear or seeking refuge in other lands. Lifesaving support is also needed for The United Methodist Church of Liberia and other churches as congregations have fled; pastors and church leaders are scattered, if still alive; and roads, schools, power plants and transportation and communication systems have been destroyed.

Church after church in the Philippines has been damaged, many beyond repair or sinking into the lands as a result of the destructive force of the strongest earthquake in recent history to hit the country. People and communities remain cut off from communication, and the assessment of damages has only begun. Thousands of homes were destroyed, many buried with farmlands and crops under mountains of mud.

In Liberia, the emergency appeal will provide lifesaving relief for people within Liberia and for refugees, particularly in West African host communities, and will aid in the repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction of churches, church property, and church institutions. In the Philippines, the emergency appeal will assist in the relief and rehabilitation needs of people and communities and in the repair and reconstruction of churches and church property. In both appeals, United Methodist gifts will assist United Methodist congregations, other churches and ecumenical groups.

Members of local congregations should make checks payable to their local churches, marked for the particular Advance Special. Local church treasurers should make checks payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference and send with both the Advance Special Remittance Form and the monthly Remittance Report. Be sure to place the Advance name and number on the form:

Bishop's Emergency Appeal for Liberia, UMCOR Advance 150300-7
Bishops' Emergency Appeal for the Philippine Earthquake, UMCOR Advance 240225-1.

The above should be sent to:
Dr. J. J. Caraway, Executive Director of Administration/ Treasurer 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720

Work Camp Scheduled

The Ruston District is sponsoring an Adult Workcamp to Unalaska and Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska June 15-29, 1991.

Host for the event is a retired missionary couple who are currently laying the groundwork for the group's arrival. Projects will include the construction of a large enclosure for a mobile home now used by the missionaries. This will include adding two bedrooms and a large meeting room. It also includes moving the trailer to Methodist land and installing utilities. Some work will be done for the host Christian Fellowship Church, and the group will paint several Aleut Indian houses and will perform community service projects. Work will begin toward the construction of a church in 1992.

Group leader for the event, the Reverend Augie Aamodt, who is also Director of Development for the Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, says that the average temperature in June is 47 degrees with frequent rain and wind. There is approximately 20 hours of daylight. Cost for the event is $1700. This includes air fare and all other expenses. Airline space, however, is very scarce due to current conditions. Group reservations expire April 15. Individual reservations may be made until May 15 by special arrangements.

The purpose of the Unalaska Outreach Ministry is to provide a United Methodist presence and witness in an isolated community with a transient population.

Those interested are asked to write to Alaska Workcamp '91, Ruston District of the Louisiana Methodist Church, P.O. Box 929, Ruston, LA 71273-0929.

A Day with Norman Neaves April 23

Dr. Norman Neaves, outstanding pastor and church consultant, will visit the Louisiana Conference on April 23 for a day-long seminar designed for senior pastors. The event, which will take place from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., will be held at Christ United Methodist Church in Shreveport.

Dr. Neaves is senior pastor of Church of the Servant United Methodist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Under his leadership, this church has grown to more than 4000 members with an average worship attendance of 2000 per week. The growth has been accomplished with theological integrity, social awareness, and with a strong emphasis on lay ministry.

Dr. Neaves is in wide demand as a speaker, workshop leader, and church consultant sharing his ideas and style of ministry with others. One very special and unique aspect of the ministry at Church of the Servant is that a large portion of the work is done by lay leadership. Pastors and professional staff are utilized as enablers, sharing the responsibility of ministry witb the entire congregation.

Pastors who are interested in attending the event should register by returning the completed form below, or by calling (318) 686-2553. Cost is $20 for the day and includes lunch. The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Committee on Continuing Education, has authorized that ½ C.E.U. be granted for attendance.

Registration

A Day with Norman Neaves

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Send to: Dr. Gerald Richardson
Christ United Methodist Church
1204 Crabapple Drive
Shreveport, LA 71118

Seminar to Enhance Communication Skills

Communication Skill Building for the '90s, a basic how-to skills seminar for your local church program, will take place July 8-13, 1991, at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

Co-sponsored by United Methodist Communications and the Scarritt-Bennett Center, the event's purpose is to provide participants an opportunity to increase skills in telling the Story of Jesus Christ in a creative way. Each workshop will be a "hands-on" experience.

Workshops have been divided into four areas and include: Video Production in Local Church; Internal Communications; Radio; and Strategy for Local Church Media Campaign.

Wright Travel, Inc. has been designated as the official travel agency for this workshop. If assistance is needed, please call 1-800-962-5158. Use the code word "Comm/Skill 91" when speaking to an agent.

For those wishing to make reservations over Saturday night, July 13, staying at the Scarritt-Bennett Center is available, along with a noon lunch, dinner, and Sunday breakfast for a $35 additional cost. Deadline for reservations is June 1, 1991.

CEU credits of 2.0 will be earned for the entire week of the workshop.

Those interested wishing further information may also contact the Louisiana Conference Office at 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802; (504) 346-1646.

Communication Skill Building for the '90s Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Annual Conference _____

Local Church _____

____ Please reserve a room at Scarritt-Bennett Center for

July ____ through July ____, 1991.

Mark the courses you wish to attend, in order of preference — #1 = first, #2 = second, etc. Class registration will be based on a first come, first serve basis.

____Video ____Internal Communications

____Radio ____Strategy for Local Church Media Campaign

Enclosed is my registration & check for $_____ payable to Scarritt-Bennett Center. Send to: Scarritt-Bennett Center, 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2166, 615/340-7540. (Cancellations made after June 10 will be refunded all but $25.)

Deadline for reservations is June 1, 1991.

Around the Conference

"We Do Overcome" was the title message brought to the congregation of St. Mark UMC in Baton Rouge for Human Relations Day by the Rev. Jeff Day. Pictured are top l. to r., Mary Alice Quiett, Chairperson; Mrs. Jeff Day, Rev. Day, the Rev. Randall Campbell, pastor; bottom l. to r., (Committee Members) Pamela Dunlap, Mildred Bowie, Dollene Sims, Ida Phillips, Lois Heath, Carrie Martin, and Lorita Frank.

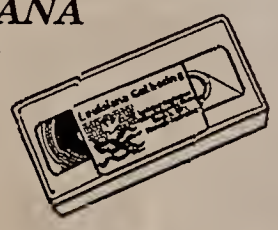
Bishop William B. Oden prepares to read the *Bishops' Initiative on The Local Church; Vital Congregations and Faithful Disciples.* This initiative of the Council of Bishops was read in United Methodist churches. Bishop Oden read the Pastoral Letter in Mathews, Memorial and Bayou Blue UMC's. The Rev. Kirby Vining, Acadiana District Superintendent and the Rev. L. Andy Foreman, pastor, look on.

In Memoriam

The Reverend Fred S. Flurry, retired minister, died March 13, 1991. Mr. Flurry is survived by his wife, Clarice.

THE LOUISIANA GATHERING

ON VIDEOCASSETTE



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Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Are you doing your 'homework'?

Consider these words about sermon preparation:

"The congregation has every reason to expect that we have seriously engaged the text, issue or theme, and are ready to share our reflections. When we substitute . . . for that personal reflection, we betray people's time and trust and our own integrity."

These comments by the Rev. Eugene Lowry, professor of preaching at UM-related St. Paul School of Theology, are aimed at a specific form of clergy misconduct: sermon-stealing (see UMR, March 29).

We believe, however, tbat Dr. Lowry's words merit serious soul-searching by all Christians, preacbers and lay people alike. They remind all of us of our frequent failure as Christians to do our "bomework," that is, to grapple in depth with the contemporary meaning and application of our faith.

No less than "sermon stealing," such failure by anyone who claims to be a Christian displays both conceit and deceit. Puffed up by only a superficial encounter with the faith, many of us delude ourselves that we are actively trying to discern and heed the mind of Jesus Christ.

This bears striking resemblance to the struggles of early Christians in Corinth. Like them, we frequently practice what appears to be "the Christian thing" to say or do.

Yet our personal and corporate conduct betrays a lack of significant effort to become "servants of Cbrist and stewards of God's mysteries" (1 Corinthians 4:1).

Such spiritual shallowness was what the Apostle Paul decried as the Corinthians' inability or unwillingness to digest the "solid food" of faith (1 Corinthians 3:2).

Twin dangers result from such shallow engagement with Christ's life and teacbings.

First, it places one in spiritual jeopardy by providing a false sense of security. In the face of a true crisis, such people find that they lack the spiritual maturity needed to withstand life's countless adversities and temptations.

Second, a spurious faith, like a purloined sermon, when exposed, discredits both the witness, and by association, the Gospel itself.

As God's witnesses, we are mandated to be authentic bearers in both word and deed of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Typically, such authenticity takes the form of an unmistakable "glow" or "light" that results from one's ongoing engagement with the Word and will of God and tbat beckons others to Christ.

Ponder these suggestions as ways to cultivate a more authentic faith:

■ Study the Bible every day. Consult commentaries and other aids to help you comprehend and apply its insights.

■ Pray daily. Regular communion with God strengthens our ability to discern and practice God's will.

■ Join a "support group"—Sunday school class, Bible study, men's or women's group—within your congregation. Share with them your faith struggles and invite them to share theirs with you.

■ Test yourself daily by asking this question: How do my actions give others a glimpse of what it means to follow Cbrist?

Letters to the Editor

'Bigger is better' outlook on teen ministry refuted

I was displeased by the implication of the March 8 "Faith Snapshot."

Once again, we see the "bigger is better" adage trumpeted before us, this time in relation to teen ministry in larger versus smaller churches.

Being pastor of a small membership church (97 members) and having served an even smaller member church (90 members), I have found that numbers, or lack thereof, are not the most important factor in impacting teens' spiritual formation.

Although our numbers are smaller than other churches, I have felt a more personal connection with our youth and their spiritual development.

It isn't the quantity of youth but the quality of the program that is the standard for effective ministry.

Barry T. Groh
Silver Lake, Indiana

Editorials appreciated

I am writing to express my thanks for your March 15 editorials, particularly the one headlined, "A higher standard for Christians."

After very helpful discussion at one of my district's churcbes involving persons with different perspectives, we ended the meeting with the editorial and a prayer.

I am very enthusiastic about the diversity of reactions, reflections and perspectives held by deeply committed United Methodists. But I am distressed by threats and what your editorial describes as "walking out," by some of my sisters and brothers.

There are many of us who for racial, gender, justice and many other reasons, have been deeply hurt by some of the words and deeds of our denomination. There have been times in our history when, through legislation and resolutions, the United Methodist Church and its predecessor bodies have declared some of us "second class."

I am consistently amazed and sometimes amused that those few persons who have become our "heresy hunters" have not acknowledged the heretical nature of some of our practices of exclusion. Yet, through it all, generation after generation after generation of my family has remained within this denomination. This is true for so many United Methodists.

The Reporter has not always articulated the spirit of reconciliation. In these editorials, you have. Thank you.

Gilbert H. Caldwell
West Chester, Pennsylvania

It's 'dissociate'!

I'm disappointed in your use of "disassociate" for "dissociate" (see UMR, March 8). People either associate or dissociate, but surely not both at the same time.

Marylou Fleming
Dallas, Texas

Editorials, SCUD compared

Your March 15 editorials regarding "walking out" were on target as much as an Iraqi SCUD missile.

Precariously guided by the concept that Christian unity is preeminent, you ignore that infidelity to God was the cause of Israel's (and the church's) rise and fall over the millennia.

Individuals who "walked out" did so only because their colleagues "walked out" from under biblical authority. When that happens, there is no longer common ground. Even Jesus becomes a portrait of whatever Picasso holds the brush.

With the situation as it is, and the Reporter's anathema of "walkouts," perhaps the dissenters should, following Isaiah's example, strip down to their "fruit of the loom," and return to their committees.

Wesley J. Gabel
Tracy, Minnesota

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What do you think?

This recent "gathering" by the Louisiana Annual Conference drew 11,000 people to an event described as "part old-fashioned revival, part new-covenant service, part evangelistic commission and wholly a joyous celebration of the life of the church" (see UMR, March 29). What value, if any, do you think such a major worship experience offers your local congregation? Send your responses by April 15 to "What do you think," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Here I Stand

'Hijack' image distorted WCC reality

By BETTY THOMPSON

Stephen Swecker supplied excellent coverage of the recent World Council of Churches assembly in Canberra. Since there were few secular journalists present, I am grateful that the Reporter gave us lively and detailed coverage of this important event.

But I have a bone to pick. I attended the assembly as an accredited member of the press as did Mr. Swecker. He claims in a story in the March 8 Reporter that the assembly was "hijacked by anti-war fervor."

The article in which Mr. Swecker's observation was reported implied that the "hijackers" were U.S. church leaders, including United Methodist Bishop Melvin Talbert and Episcopal Bishop Edmond Browning.

He defines hijacked as being "taken in an unplanned direction against the will and/or best interest of the body." Where I come from hijackers aren't very nice people. They coerce others against their will. They are outlaws who are disrespectful of others' rights. Mr. Swecker's image of hijackers used in the context of the Middle East is especially unfortunate.

I admit that the Gulf War preoccupied the assembly. But I submit that this was not because "a well organized faction of anti-war activists was going to make sure that the war became the assembly's major issue," as the article stated.

Whole world was concerned

It's true that the war dominated press conferences, executive committee statements, sermons, etc. That is precisely the point: The whole world was concerned about what increasingly felt like a possible World War III.

It was not the U.S. participants who suggested to New Zealand's Bishop Paul Reeves that the war was neither "holy nor just," as he said in his opening sermon. The general secretary and the executive committee called for a ceasefire before the assembly ever began.

"Here I Stand" is a column through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns facing the church. Ms. Betty Thompson lives in New York, N.Y., and is public relations director of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

As delegates and leaders of their churches, Bishops Browning and Talbert properly asked the global Christian community to join in appealing for a ceasefire.

The newly elected head of the Central Committee of the World Council, Armenian Archbishop Aram Keshishian, told a press conference that the war was between a superpower which acted as the policeman of the world (albeit in a coalition of some 30 nations) and a regional power attempting to dominate the region.

Bishop Browning, a participant in that same press conference, quoted the secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches, Gabriel Habib, who, when asked what side God was on, said "God is on the side of those who are suffering."

Leaders drafted statement

No doubt the majority of Americans present were determined that the assembly know that they didn't support the war. Leaders drafted a statement to that effect and circulated it among U.S. participants.

Some participants from the United States worked on the statement eventually passed by the assembly. But at a special hearing early in the assembly, a wide spectrum of speakers from many nations challenged the position of the United States government.

It is simplistic to attribute all of the above to U.S. anti-war activists and their propaganda. The assembly did spend an enormous amount of time on the Gulf War at the expense of some other important subjects. But it was a global concern.

This assembly was a week shorter than previous ones and had too little deliberative time. Hindsight may determine that too much time was expended on this subject.

The fighting has ceased, thank God, but the turmoil in the Middle East continues. The United States and its allies demonstrated that modern military technology could defeat a deluded regional dictator. We escaped with few casualties.

But we do not yet know what the casualties were in Iraq where some estimate that 70 percent of the bombs fell on non-military targets. Nor do we know how we can assist in bringing peace and justice to the area.

To suggest that such matters were merely a concern of pushy peace activists from America is a serious misreading of a tragic situation.

What others are saying

"It seems a beautiful irony that an event of 2,000 years ago could still be news. But every time an individual hears and heeds the Gospel for the first time, it is personal news all over again."

—Susan Spencer-Smith, United Methodist layperson, Franklinville, N.J.

* * *

"War, however brief, always has a high price in life and destruction. . . . there were families who paid the supreme price—a son or daughter, father or mother, husband or wife is now absent from the family circle. . . . Indeed for those families, it was not a short war. It was one person too long."

—United Methodist Bishop Woodie W. White, Illinois Area

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

He said to him, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: 1 Corinthians 1:25)

Readings for week of April 8

Monday: Psalms 133
Tuesday: Psalms 134
Wednesday: Acts 4:1-31
Thursday: Acts 4:32-35
Friday: John 20:19-31
Saturday: John 21
Sunday: 1 John 1:1-2:2

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June 18–20	Pittsburgh, PA
June 27–29	Atlanta, GA
July 11–13	Dallas, TX
July 18–20	Kansas City, KS
July 25–27	Pasco, WA
July 30–Aug. 1	*South Indiana Conference*
Aug. 8–10	Syracuse, NY
Sept. 3–5	Denver, CO
Sept. 24–26	*South Georgia Conference*

For dates in italics, contact the conference offices regarding information on their training seminars.

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Faith watch

DAYS OF THANKSGIVING: President Bush has proclaimed April 5-7 "The National Days of Thanksgiving." Mr. Bush asked that Americans "gather in homes and places of worship to give thanks . . . for the remarkable unity of our people" during the Persian Gulf conflict and "remember and pray for all those who made the ultimate sacrifice." He urged that U.S. flags be flown and that "bells across the country be set to ringing" at 3 p.m. (EDT) April 7 "in celebration of the liberation of Kuwait and the end of hostilities in the Persian Gulf."

ON 'LOSING SIDE'? A survey of coverage in four major U.S. media outlets has found that the Roman Catholic Church came out "on the losing side" in stories about controversies involving the church. But the study, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, also found that official church teachings "were frequently presented, most often without refutation by critics" and that on some issues church teaching was endorsed by a majority of sources cited.

SUPPORT LABOR: Twenty national religious leaders have launched a campaign to build support for organized labor's drive to ban the permanent replacement of workers who go on strike. Calling attention to the tradition of church support for organized labor, the statement says, "This is a time for labor and religion to work together for common ends. The question of permanent replacement workers is one that unions should not address alone." Among those signing the statement was the Rev. Randolph Nugent, general secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

FIRST FACULTY NAMED: The Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va., a new school being established by moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention, has announced election of its first two full-time faculty members and plans to open for classes in the fall of 1991. The Rev. G. Thomas Halbrooks, currently professor of church history at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., will be dean of the faculty and professor of church history at the new seminary. Linda McKinnish Bridges, visiting professor in New Testament studies at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, will be assistant professor of New Testament at the new school.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Bush: No ill will toward religious critics of war

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

WASHINGTON—Exuding a demeanor of "malice toward none, charity for all," President Bush told a group of religious journalists last week that he harbors no ill will toward church leaders who vocally opposed his Persian Gulf war policy.

"I think statements like [theirs] come from the heart. I just disagree with them," the president said in response to a question about how he felt toward church critics of the war.

Mr. Bush's comments came during a March 28 question-and-answer session at the White House with 15 people from the religious media, including the Reporter.

"We have to have a tolerance for diversity," the president said.

But, he added emphatically, history will show that the decision to go to war in the Persian Gulf was a "morally correct action."

Contrary to the view of some church leaders, there is such a thing as a "just war," he said.

'I have no anger'

"I have no anger about [the criticism of church leaders]. I have no feeling that someone is less of an American or less patriotic than I am. But they're wrong and I was right."

In response to another question, the president indicated an openness to the concerns of religious leaders and offered insight into how he tries to relate his identity as a Christian to his role as an elected political leader.

Asked about the "weight" that he attaches to expressions of dissent by religious leaders, Mr. Bush said he regards such "petitions and interventions" as "appropriate."

"I think the president should listen and be open minded enough to hear protest," he said.

President Bush
. . . no ill will toward critics

He pointed out, for example, that, prior to initiating military action to expel Iraq from Kuwait, he had visited with Bishop Edmund Browning, head of the Episcopal Church of which he and his wife are members.

Bishop Browning strongly urged the president to refrain from launching the war against Iraq.

"I had nothing in my heart that felt a bitterness or a restlessness [toward him] that he didn't understand where I was coming from," the president said.

He added, however, that in responding to such petitions he "draws the line at the separation of church and state."

'I am a Christian'

"I don't believe the president ought to involve himself in any way that indicates" preference for one denomination over another.

"I am a Christian. I go to Episcopal services across the street when I'm not at Camp David. And there I attend [non-denominational worship services] faithfully.

"I think it's important, Barbara and I do, and we ought to demonstrate that. . . . It has a way of spilling out and setting an example for the country."

But he said he is "still not too comfortable" with how his personal identity as a Christian should relate to his role as a public leader.

He said he is trying to sort out "this heretofore very personal area of my life."

"I don't want to act like I'm holier than thou, or that I want to wear my faith or religion on my sleeve, or that I'm the guy out there beating his breast and praying the loudest," Mr. Bush said.

"But I do want to . . . amplify as best one can that we are 'one nation under God'."

According to a White House spokesperson, the 45-minute roundtable meeting was the first of its kind with the religious media during the Bush Administration.

MISSOURI WEST CONFERENCE PHOTO BY STEVE COX

Minister elected mayor

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—United Methodist the Rev. Emanuel Cleaver has been elected the first black mayor of Kansas City. Mr. Cleaver, pastor of St. James-Paseo UMC in Kansas City, won in a runoff election March 26. Mr. Cleaver ended 12 years on the Kansas City council last year. During his 17 years as pastor, St. James-Paseo grew from 47 members to 1,839. Whether he will continue in the pastorate after being sworn in as mayor April 10 was unclear last week pending conversations including Bishop W. T. Handy Jr. (Missouri Area) and congregation officials.

UM black caucus puts emphasis on how to 'REACH' men for Christ

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

HOUSTON—What's the secret formula to "REACH" black men for Christ?

United Methodist churches must develop new ways to "Recruit them, Equip them, Appreciate them, Challenge them and Help them," to let black men know the church really cares.

That was the emphasis of the 24th annual meeting of Black Methodists for Church Renewal March 20-23 in Houston.

Every year the denomination's unofficial black caucus meets in a different urban city to address issues of the black church.

This year nearly 500 delegates worshiped, heard speakers, and held strategy sessions focusing on "The Status and Role of Black Men in Church and Society."

The Rev. Alfred Norris, president of United Methodist-related Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, gave the formula and ways to "REACH" black men for Christ.

• "Black men and black boys need to see men as positive role models," he said. "Black men need to do more than be available to open church buildings.

• "We cannot leave, disown, or slander black men or boys when they get in trouble," he said. "When a young black man from your church was in the hospital, did you or the men of your church see him? Do you minister to men in our prisons?"

• "Churches have got to find a way to be open during the week for prayer and counseling." Dr. Norris said more United Methodist churches should be in partnership with the community to develop educational programs for black men.

During one of four workshop sessions on black males, the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell told 100 participants, "If the worship experience turns men off, you won't get them back into the church."

Mr. Caldwell heads the 5,200-member Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston.

He said that the local church order of worship or bulletin should show a sense of pride about mission, ready to reach out to "the unchurched and the dechurched."

"Use plain words—nothing fancy," said Mr. Caldwell.

Men should be taught to take the lead in church evangelism, he said. Men can bring other men to a prayer breakfast, write visiting men a note inviting them back to the church or can call to say "God bless you."

"How many brothers get a phone call from another brother besides a bill collector?" asked Mr. Caldwell.

Cross-racial pastorates seen as road to unifying church

Reporter Staff Special

HOUSTON—A retired member of the Council of Bishops says black United Methodists must take the lead in unifying the church through cross-racial appointments.

That was the challenge of Bishop L. Scott Allen of Atlanta during a communion service for Black Methodists for Church Renewal—the denomination's unofficial black caucus—March 20.

Bishop Allen told some 1,000 people at Houston's Windsor Village United Methodist Church that in the 1990s the emphasis has shifted from integration to equality.

Nearly 25 years after the United Methodist Church was formed, the denomination still has not achieved a unified church, said the bishop.

"Here tonight, in the United Methodist Church, there is an issue we must deal with," he said.

"The issue is: young black preachers don't appreciate going to beg for a white congregation. Either we're going to be in it full fledged or we're going to be out of it.

"There's a difference now between old theory and maintaining dignity and self respect. I went into back doors to open front doors for you," said the bishop, reminding the crowd of the years when Methodism was segregated on the basis of race.

"But we're not going to do that anymore . . . If it doesn't open, we're going somewhere else!"

Black United Methodist preachers must remember that 'their dedication should be to the religious experience," he said.

"We've got too many anemic congregations. . . . You've got to tell them that Jesus lives," said Bishop Allen in a fatherly tone.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

'Stacked' homosexuality study charge met by flat denial

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Allegations that a special United Methodist churchwide committee to study homosexuality has a "stacked" membership—a topic discussed unofficially for months—broke into the open recently.

The allegations were met immediately by an angry denial by a person directly involved in helping create the committee.

The panel is proposing changes in The United Methodist Church's stance on homosexuality (see UMR, Feb. 15).

Direct questioning of how the committee was created surfaced at a recent meeting of the executive committee of the church's General Council on Ministries.

The council, mandated by the 1988 General Conference to conduct the study, is responsible for creation of the Committee to Study Homosexuality.

The council's executive committee, anticipating extended discussion when the full council convenes at Lake Junaluska, N.C., April 20-24, has sent all 133 council members detailed reports of the study committee's selection process and history (see accompanying story).

Doesn't set well

Harold Nixon of Abilene, Texas, a lay member of the executive committee, told that group's recent meeting in San Antonio, Texas, that the proposed changes recommended by the study committee did not set well with him or his constituents in the Northwest Texas Annual Conference.

The study committee's overwhelming support for changing the denomination's official position reflects a flawed selection process, Mr. Nixon asserted.

Harold Nixon

Donald Hayashi

"I want to know, and my constitutents want to know, how the members were selected," he said.

Mr. Nixon acknowledged to the Reporter that he was a member of the GCOM executive committee in 1988 when that body formed the nominating committee that helped select members of the homosexuality study panel.

He also acknowledged that he was present at the GCOM meeting in Fall 1988 when the nominating committee presented its report subsequently amended by and then adopted by the full council.

Mr. Nixon told the Reporter last week that he and others in his conference are "working on things to counteract the committee's report." He declined to specify what those things are.

At the San Antonio meeting, agency executive Donald L. Hayashi said he is "outraged by people in the church who say the study committee is stacked."

He said members were carefully identified for diversity and qualifications in the fields of study specified by the 1988 General Conference mandate.

In 1988, as a staff member of the California-Nevada Annual Conference, Mr. Hayashi was an elected director of the General Council on Ministries and helped recommend the original members of the study committee. In September 1990 he resigned that elected position and became an associate general secretary of the GCOM staff.

Nominees represented fields

Mr. Hayashi pointed out that study panel members were selected in 1988 from a list of nominees representing fields such as sociology, theology, psychiatry and biology.

Other members came from among the council's elected directors and the Council of Bishops and included three persons at large to guarantee varying points of view on the subject, he added.

C. David Lundquist, the council's chief executive and its staff representative to the study committee, told the San Antonio meeting that "flags are being raised prematurely over the committee's decision.

"If the only task the study committee had was to retain or change Paragraph 71F of the Social Principles, reaction by United Methodist constituents would be warranted," Mr. Lundquist added.

The committee's full mandate from the 1988 General Conference is to research homosexuality from biblical, theological, ethical and scientific perspectives; identify where there is consensus and disagreement among these perspectives; and to make recommendations on the issue for the life and ministry of the church, including possible changes in the Social Principles.

Information from United Methodist News Service was used in this report.

Three-page paper spells out panel selection process

How were members of the denominationwide Committee to Study Homosexuality selected?

According to a three-page summary prepared for the General Council on Ministries' April 20-24 meeting in Lake Junaluska, N.C., this was the process:

In September 1988 the council's executive committee authorized its then-president, Bishop James S. Thomas, to form a six-person nominating committee to propose members of the homosexuality study panel.

The committee named by Bishop Thomas included chairwoman Jean Dowell of Bloomington, Minn., Bishop Ernest Fitzgerald (Atlanta Area), Donald L. Hayashi of Castro Valley, Calif., the Rev. Jack Heacock of Austin, Texas, Betty Ann Henderson of Philadelphia, and the Rev. Reginald Ponder of Lake Junaluska, N.C.

The nominating committee then considered some 140 names suggested for the study group.

The committee's recommendations followed the 1988 General Conference mandate that the homosexuality study panel include "persons representative of the major existing points of view on homosexuality within the church and persons well versed in scientific and theological method."

Within the study group's makeup, two persons were selected from each of the following categories: biblical scholar, theologian, ethicist, biologist, psychiatrist and/or psychologist, sociologist and a representative of the homosexual community.

Initially, the nominating committee recommended a 21-member panel. The number grew to 26, however, as a result of action by the full council in November 1988. GCOM directors voted to add three more representatives from the council itself, a youth member, and a representative of United Methodists outside the United States.

After the homosexuality study committee organized in February 1989, members expressed dismay that the panel did not include a self-acknowledged homosexual man.

William Kent, a Jacksonville, Fla., attorney, was added to the panel by a vote of the General Council on Ministries in April 1989.

Since its creation, four of the original members have resigned: Bishop Neil L. Irons (New Jersey Area), who was succeeded by Bishop Richard C. Looney (South Georgia Area); the Rev. James C. Logan, professor of systematic theology at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington; Dr. Stanley Hauerwas, professor of Christian social ethics at Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C.; and Dr. James W. Holsinger Jr., a physician, of Washington.

Drs. Logan, Hauerwas and Holsinger have not been replaced.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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Faith connections

ADVANCE GIVING DROPS: More than $27 million was raised in 1990 through the Advance for Christ and His Church, the "second-mile" volunteer mission giving fund of The United Methodist Church. Bishop Judith Craig, Advance Committee chair, said the income represents a decline of $2.9 million over 1989 figures of $30 million. She said the difference is directly related to high 1989 receipts for relief efforts following Hurricane Hugo and the California earthquake. Gifts to the Advance support projects related to three units of the church's General Board of Global Ministries. For 1990, those subtotals were a record $4.7 million for the hoard's National Division, just over $12 million for the World Division and $11 million for the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

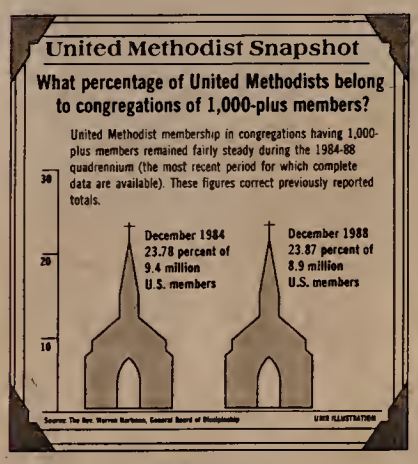
Judith Craig

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR: Nearly 1,400 copies of a publication called "Conscientious Ohjectors and the Draft" were requested by United Methodists from the General Board of Church and Society during the Persian Gulf War. Donna Boe of Pocatello, Idaho, chairperson of the board's Peace With Justice Work Area, said Church and Society lists some 100 United Methodists who registered with the U.S. Selective Service Board as conscientious objectors.

INFANT FORMULA TALKS: Though infant formula manufacturers have taken some steps to abide by the World Health Organization code covering such products, several have recently committed "hlatant" violations, such as direct advertising to consumers. That's the finding of the United Methodist Infant Formula Task Force, in a report to the General Board of Church and Society in mid-March. Sara S. Shingler of Spartanhurg, S.C., task force chairperson, said Carnation/Nestle joined Bristol Meyers/Gerber in giving free samples to the consumer, thereby deemphasizing breastfeeding. The task force voted to ask the church's General Board of Pensions to accompany them to stockholders meetings for Bristol-Myers on May 7 and Gerber on Aug. 7 to file shareholder resolutions against these latest practices.

CORRECTION: The name of Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, was omitted from the original report of United Methodist-related schools listed among the nation's top 50 in a recent publication hy editors of the "National Review" magazine (see UMR, March 22). Listed correctly were Birmingham-Southern University in Birmingham, Ala.; Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss; Boston University and Wofford College in Spartanhurg, S.C.

CIEMAL BISHOP KILLED: Bishop Isac Alberto Rodrigues Aco, 55, leader of the Second Ecclesiastical Region of the Methodist Church of Brazil, was killed in a car accident March 25. His son, Marcus Wesley, also died, and another son, Joao Paulo, who was driving, suffered serious injuries. Bishop Aco was president of the College of Bishops of the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America (CIEMAL). In November, he was elected as the first Protestant president of the National Council of Churches in Brazil. Before being elected to the episcopacy in 1982, Bishop Aco served as president of the Methodist School of Theology in Sao Paulo.



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Fellowship winners in a class by themselves

Past Stoody-West scholars have devoted their lives and careers to the church's service

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Where are they now, some of the 26 past recipients of the $6,000 religious journalism grant offered annually by United Methodist Communications?

In interviews with the Reporter, several Stoody-West Fellowship winners reflected on how the grant had influenced their lives and how it affected what they are doing today.

The award is given in honor of the late Rev. Ralph Stoody and the Rev. Arthur West of Lebanon, Ohio. The two were leaders in United Methodist religious communications from 1940 to 1975 (see related article).

1968 The Rev. Ronald Paul Patterson, senior editor of resources, United Methodist Publishing House.

R. Patterson

Mr. Patterson grew up in an Evangelical United Brethren parsonage in Ohio.

He got his first taste of publications work at Otterbein Press, publishing house of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, as curriculum and youth editor. While working full-time at Otterbein, he was a part-time student at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Mr. Patterson credits his present position to the grant for graduate study in religious communications.

"The Fellowship came when I was at the crossroads, trying to decide hetween theology and journalism," he said. "I then realized I could combine hoth interests. [The award] changed my life. It was a wonderful thing."

As the award's fourth recipient and the first ordained minister to receive it, Mr. Patterson got his master's degree in mass communications from United Methodist-related Syracuse University.

He became the founding editor of "Alive Now," a devotional magazine puhlished hy the Upper Room, and served 12 years as hook editor and editorial director of Ahingdon Press.

In his 25 years of ministry, two things stand out, he said: puhlishing the works of John Wesley and serving on the Hymnal Revision Committee which produced the current United Methodist Hymnal.

1969 George Morris Daniels, recently retired as executive editor of "New World Outlook."

A native of St. Louis, Mr. Daniels grew up in a Methodist family.

G. Daniels

When he graduated with a journalism degree from Drake University in 1951, very few blacks were hired by U.S. newspapers, he said. He found a job with "The Chicago Defender," a hlack weekly newspaper, and his first job with the church was as a news writer for "Together" magazine, based in Chicago, in 1957.

In 1960 he went to work for the Methodist Board of Missions (forerunner of today's United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries) news department and stayed with that organization 28 years.

The Fellowship allowed him to attend graduate school in journalism at Columbia University where he got his master's degree.

"I needed to get additional training," he said. "It was a good opportunity to learn new technologies and enhance my work at the board. [The grant] really helped out."

Although he is officially retired, Mr. Daniels writes for several church-related and secular magazines. He is writing a book dealing with missions and his years with the church's mission board.

1976 Bishop Lawrence Ayo Ladigbolu, Nigeria.

L. Ladigbolu

Born a prince in a royal Nigerian family, Mr. Ladigbolu was once a crusader for Islam who "incited people to stone Christians," he said.

In 1962, he was converted to Christianity by a missionary and was suhsequently disowned by his family. He began his theological training in Nigeria and "walked from place to place as an evangelist" starting eight churches, he said.

He came to the United States to study at United Methodist-related Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas. Winning the Fellowship provided him enough money to continue his education in mass communications. He was the first winner who was not an American, he said.

He returned to Nigeria and was elected a hishop in the Methodist Church of Nigeria in 1984. He continues to write poetry and Christian music and to hroadcast on radio and television.

1979 Gladys Ophelia Wilson-Beach, executive secretary for mission education, General Board of Global Mlnistries.

The 11th of 12 children, Ms. Wilson-Beach grew up in a Pentecostal church in Stockton, Md. She became a memher of the United Methodist Church in 1977 while a student at United Methodist-related Drew Theological School in Madison, N.J.

G. Wilson-Beach

Winning the Fellowship enahled her to attain her master's degree from New York University School of Journalism.

She immediately went to work for the church's General Board of Glohal Ministries. Now a columnist and contrihutor to church-related magazines, an author and an educator—all in the field of mission education—she said she feels her journalism experience helped her.

"Before I went to journalism school, I didn't know how I could use my skills," she said. "Now I have a joh that is a good blend of theological reflection, writing and training [people for mission work]."

Ms. Wilson-Beach is working on a doctorate in adult education at Columhia University.

1982 Denise Johnson Stovall, associate editor, United Methodist Reporter.

With a mother in broadcasting in Chicago, Ms. Stovall grew up with an interest in communications.

Although her church background was United Church of Christ, she said she became interested in the United Methodist Church while working on a journalism degree at United Methodist-related Clark College in Atlanta.

D. Stovall

In the 1970s, Ms. Stovall said, the church was putting a lot of money into the journalism program at Clark, hringing in some top writers to teach for a semester or so.

"This was the first time I'd heard of a church that set aside money to train writers and journalists in black colleges," she said. "It was impressive to me that these people were really serious."

Ms. Stovall hecame a United Methodist in 1979 while she was puhlic information director for Clark College.

She said the Fellowship allowed her to pursue graduate work in public relations at the University of Georgia. She joined the editorial staff of the United Methodist Reporter in 1987.

1984 Leah Gallardo, anthropology teacher, Ventura (Calif.) College.

The daughter of a retired California United Methodist pastor, Ms. Gallardo studied anthropology at California State University, Los Angeles, and journalism at the University of Southern California.

L. Gallardo

The Fellowship helped her finish her master's program at USC, she said.

As a freelance writer she has published articles in "El Interprete," the Spanish-language magazine of the United Methodist Church, and other Hispanic magazines.

She has also appeared as a correspondent on "Catch the Spirit," the weekly television show of the United Methodist Church.

She uses her journalism skills, she said, through her work as a public relations consultant to church groups and community organizations that are "reaching out to others," she said.

1991 awards go to 2 women

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

Two women have been chosen as recipients of United Methodist Communications' 1991-92 fellowship and scholarship awards.

Twenty-eight-year-old Andrea Gerlin of Bantam, Conn., who plans to attend Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism in the fall, has been awarded the 1991-92 Stoody-West Fellowship for graduate study in religious journalism.

The $6,000 fellowship honors the Rev. Arthur West of Lehanon, Ohio, and the late Ralph Stoody, who were staff executives of United Methodist Communications or one of its predecessor agencies.

Dr. Stoody retired in 1964 as general secretary and director of the former Commission on Public Relations and Methodist Information. He died in 1979.

Dr. West retired in 1975 as head of UMCom's Division of Public Media.

Ms. Gerlin, an Episcopalian, is a reporter at the "Register-Citizen," a newspaper in Torrington, Conn. She previously worked at the Episcopal Church Center in New York and briefly served as a researcher for the "New York Times Magazine."

She has a hachelor's degree in architecture from Harvard College and one from Cambridge University, England, where she majored in theology and church history and served as an elected student representative to the Divinity Faculty Board.

Ms. Gerlin, 28, is a member of Trinity Church on Copley Square, Boston, and a member of the church's Altar Guild.

In March she won an all-expenses paid fellowship to an American Press Institute seminar on investigative reporting.

Winner of the 1991-92 $1,000 Leonard M. Perryman Scholarship for Ethnic Minority Students is Laura Mihara of Zanesville, Ohio.

Mr. Perryman was a United Methodist journalist for nearly 30 years before his death in 1983.

The 22-year-old Miss Mihara studies at Cincinnati Bible College and is pursuing a writing and editing career for Christian puhlications.

Ms. Mihara was a Rotary Club exchange student in the Philippines in 1985-87 and valedictorian of her 1987 class at Champion High School. She won a National Collegiate English Award in 1988 and is a member of the National Dean's List. She also has attended Taylor University in Upland, Ind.

Ms. Mihara is a memher of the North Terrace Church of Christ (Christian Church) in Zanesville and has taught both Sunday School and evening church (grades K-3) there.

The commitee selecting the student winners is chaired by Helen Chang of San Francisco. Other members are the Rev. Sherylan Gay Thorson of Phoenix and John A. Lovelace of Dallas.

Black colleges aid increases

United Methodists contributed $7,643,857 to the church's Black College Fund in 1990, up more than 3 percent from the previous year. The figure represents 80.6 percent of apportionments, said Shirley A.R. Lewis, executive director of the Black College Fund for the denomination's Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Churches work to aid children

United Methodist
News Service

In the Northern Illinois Annual Conference, churches are teaching parenting skills and dealing with the prohlems of cocaine-addicted habies.

In the Little Rock Annual Conference, teen pregnancy and adolescent health issues are heing addressed.

And in the West Virginia Annual Conference, churches are setting up after-school programs for "latchkey" children and estahlishing support groups for troubled families.

Those conferences are part of a Child Advocacy Network coordinated hy the Health and Welfare Ministries Department of the United Methodist Board of Glohal Ministries.

The long-term goal is to have a child advocate at each local United Methodist Church, according to Judy Hunt, an executive staff member of the department.

Through church and conference programs and a Chicago-area agency called ChildServ, the Northern Illinois Conference has heen a longtime advocate for children.

"The issues that confront us most often are issues of poverty, ahuse and neglect of children," said David Kirk, ChildServ's director and an advisor to the Child Advocacy Network.

In Arkansas, Joycelyn Elders—a United Methodist who serves as the state's director of health—has received church support in her efforts on adolescent health and early childhood education.

West Virginia Bishop William B. Grove called together a Task Force on Child Advocacy in 1989, responding to concerns voiced hy agencies dealing with children.

Later that year, 11 pilot congregations were selected to assess children's needs in their areas, provide local outreach or lohhy for public policies, said Gary Wilson, chairman.

The pilot program has heen successful enough that 14 more congregations were added in 1990.

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CHOIR CLINIC

Agency's child advocacy network offers assistance to conferences

United Methodist News Service

Joining the United Methodist Child Advocacy Network (see story ahove) is "one of the most cost-effective ministries" a conference can undertake, according to Judy Hunt, Health and Welfare Ministries.

Seven conferences are in the network; another eight are in various stages of developing child advocacy programs.

Responses to a questionnaire distributed to annual conference and child agency staff have ranked the top concems, in order, as teenage pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, troubled children and youth, drug addiction, and parent-child conflicts.

Pressing issues in all locations also included poverty, suicide, erosion of value systems, dysfunction of family life, school dropouts, homelessness and inadequate housing.

For more information on the Child Advocacy Network contact Health and Welfare Ministries, Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 300, New York, N.Y. 10115.

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Physician believes prayer heals

Religion and medicine should be allies in healing, UM doctor says

By CAL SAMRA

ANN ARBOR, Mich.—At the start of every Monday morning, four physicians get together and pray for their patients.

One is Dr. Winslow G. Fox, 67, a well-known family physician and Christian ecumenist. He is a long-time member of the First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor.

The other three physicians, with whom he shares offices near the University of Michigan campus, are Catholic.

Dr. Fox is a long-time advocate of bringing a spiritual dimension to the practice of medicine. For many years he was chairman of the committee on Medicine and Religion for the Michigan State Medical Society.

Believes in spiritual healing

"I believe in spiritual healing," he says. "It's usually not an instantaneous thing. It's more likely to occur gradually with a combination of medicine and prayer."

Dr. Fox said he believes that religion and medicine, pastors and medical doctors, can be and should be allies—not antagonists—in the healing process.

He notes that recent research at Harvard Medical School by Dr. Jared Kass and Dr. Herbert Benson indicates that continual meditative or centering prayer effectively calms the "hyper-arousal" state induced by the disease-producing stresses of modern life.

The researchers found that continual prayer dramatically lowers blood pressure, oxygen consumption and respiration rate while improving blood circulation, he said.

Like many other Christians, Dr. Fox is concerned that American society and its institutions—including the medical profession—are becoming increasingly secularized.

"More and more, people are worshiping knowledge, because they feel that with knowledge they can get everything they want," he explains. "In the long run, they will be disappointed."

Dr. Fox said he was intrigued by an article which appeared recently in the magazine of the Academy of Medicine in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The lead article appeared with the headline: "Are Your Patients Seeking the Healing Power of Prayer?"

It begins: "If you think faith healing is the sole province of itinerant and flamboyant preachers, you're out of touch with an important American phenomenon."

The article then describes the way that spiritual healing has moved into the mainstream of American religious life since the 1950s.

Dr. Fox said he believes that the medical profession should also be aware that there are gifted healers among the clergy and lay people and not oppose them.

Potential for fraud

"God works through different instruments," he says. "But there is also a potential for human folly or fraud in this area.

"We have to guard against people who, for instance, say, 'Oh, the Lord is going to heal me. I can quit taking my insulin now.' This is dangerous. Things have to be kept in balance."

He adds: "It doesn't have to be an either/or proposition. It can be a both/and proposition."

Dr. Fox, who also has been a consulting editor to the Kalamazoo-based Fellowship of Merry Christians, has two favorite proverbs:

"Being cheerful keeps you healthy. It is slow death to be gloomy all the time." (Proverbs 17:22)

"Keep God's laws and you'll live longer." (Proverbs 19:16)

Dr. Fox retired recently after practicing medicine 41 years.

The Spanish-speaking physician and his wife, Elizabeth (who has been his office manager) have volunteered their services as medical missionaries to places where doctors are urgently needed.

Winslow G. Fox

They are heading for Colorado, Arizona, and California to tend to the health needs of poor people, Native Americans and Hispanic migrant workers.

That is their idea of retirement.

Mr. Samra, former executive director of a psychiatric research foundation, lives in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Can clergy families lead a 'normal' life?

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

"Ministers are people, too," according to findings of a national survey of Protestant ministers conducted by researchers at United Methodist-related Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C.

Researchers Robert Wilson and Paul Mickey, United Methodists, and Ginny W. Ashmore, who is married to a Presbyterian minister, said ministers face the same life and relationship problems common to other U.S. citizens.

But, according to Dr. Mickey, "Normal life, in terms of the lives of families outside the clergy, does not appear to be possible for this group."

In addition to the problems of the average family, researchers found, ministers deal with a unique set of issues. Those issues include clergy spouse-church relationship, clergy marriage and increasing clergy divorce, financial struggles and lack of privacy.

Dr. Wilson recently retired as director of the school's J.M. Ormond Center, and Dr. Mickey is an associate professor of pastoral theology at the divinity school.

Survey looks at clergy life

They say the survey, begun in 1988 at the center, represents the largest statistical analysis and one of the first data-based looks at clergy marriage and family life.

Questionnaires were sent to 1,500 randomly selected clergy members in a broad range of denominations, including the United Methodist Church. About half were completed and returned.

The ministers' sense of vocation was a factor in ability to deal with stress and in how they feel about their professions, Dr. Mickey said.

"In the homes where the minister and his or her family have a strong sense of vocational calling, there seems to be greater capacity for coping with stress and keeping the family together," the report says.

Clergy marriages in which the spouse knew in advance that his or her marriage partner would be a minister appear to experience less stress than those in which a spouse changes professions in midstream, findings indicate.

Stress leads to splits

Partners in clergy marriages that have ended in divorce admitted that stress and conditions of the ministry had some bearing on the split, the researchers found.

According to Dr. Mickey, denominations perceived as "more liberal" experience the largest number of clergy divorces and are more likely to experience career conflict between the spouses.

Advantages of the profession listed by participating clergy included creativity and flexible schedules.

Disadvantages they named included lack of privacy, being "on call" 24 hours a day, finances and amount of time spent together, which appears to be the biggest issue between clergy and their families.

Church members should "remember that the minister and his or her family are human beings ... (but) a minister must learn to set boundaries and to determine that the family can't come last," Dr. Mickey said.

While clergy parents admitted to having problems with their children, most "seemed to have decided that they'll let children be children, instead of trying to force them to be perfect little Christians," he added.

Results of the survey will be featured in "Clergy Families: Is Normal Life Possible?" written by Drs. Wilson and Mickey, to be published this fall by Zondervan.

Review

PBS offers look at charismatic movement

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

There are pentecostal and charismatic movements within every major denomination in America, yet they receive little attention in the mass media.

The Public Broadcasting System's excellent new half-hour documentary, "Prophet," offers a penetrating look at this phenomenon.

"Prophet" shows us a revival led by self-proclaimed prophet Brian Jefferson Mosley.

Mr. Mosley pitches his tent on a vacant lot in a ghetto neighborhood of Newark, N.J., and proceeds to preach, baptize, lay hands upon members of the audience and "slay them in the Spirit."

With lively music, dramatic flairs, and not a little showmanship, Mr. Mosley leads them in singing, shouting, twitching, falling into trances and speaking in tongues.

Filmmaker Sandra King presents Mr. Mosley and the revivalgoers directly, without a narrator imposing belief or disbelief on the claims they make about healings and prophecies. Then she takes us outside the tent to get the reaction of neighborhood people.

She also gets the views of Hardat Sukhedo, a psychiatrist who has studied religious cults extensively, and the Rev. Samuel Proctor, a Baptist pastor who also teaches at Rutgers University.

There are mixed reactions to Mr. Mosley from the ghetto and from the experts.

Dr. Proctor acknowledges that the poor often will go to a street-preacher such as Mr. Mosley but not to a prosperous, well-dressed congregation such as his own Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem.

Dr. Sukhedo contends that Mr. Mosley does not give the poor false hope, since he does not promise that faith will get them anywhere in this world, only that they will get to God.

The documentary next visits an all-white Catholic charismatic prayer meeting, where Dr. Proctor reminds us that pentecostalism started among whites, not blacks.

From here on out, the pastor and the psychiatrist take sharply and surprisingly different positions on Mr. Mosley's work.

Pastor Proctor contends that "Jesus didn't behave like that and he didn't teach anybody to behave like that."

On the other hand, psychiatrist Sukhedo suggests that real healing may occur when Mr. Mosley induces mass hypnosis and sends people into trances.

Dr. Proctor cautions that such a "religious high" may not be much different from getting high on drugs while Dr. Sukhedo says, "At least it's an escape for one night."

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM PHOTO

Public Broadcasting's documentary "Prophet!" explores the meaning of emotional, evangelical types of religion through a visit to the Rev. Brian Mosley's revival tent in the heart of inner-city Newark, N.J.

"Prophet" can be seen on most public television stations at 10:30 p.m. EST April 10, but be sure to check local listings.

PBS is to be commended for offering such a lively, serious inquiry into religious faith and practice.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park United Methodist Church on Long Island, N.Y., frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

VISN announces new offerings for spring

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—VISN, the interfaith TV cable network, has announced new offerings for spring viewing.

For instance, there is "The Good Green Earth," a gardening show for those who want to raise environmental issues as well as lovely red roses.

Long-time "Christian Science Monitor" gardening writer Peter Tonge gives viewers practical tips and their tie-ins to things ecological.

There's also "Bless Me Father," the latest popular British situation comedy import, with the situation here pitting two 1950s-like Catholic priests on the opposite side of the generation gap against each other. Eccentric Father Duddleswell takes on the earnest Father Boyd. It was a prime time favorite in England.

Major American authors like Mary Gordon, Chaim Potok or Madeline L'Engle can be seen reading from their work on "Writers Reading."

And a selection of classic and new children's books is offered for young viewers on "The Children's Room."

"Expressions of Faith" is a documentary series looking at the way faith takes root among VISN's different member groups, resulting in service to others.

There is also a celebrity-format talk show, "Conversations with Robert Clary," produced by the Jewish Television Network in Los Angeles.

Host Clary, a regular on the old "Hogan's Heroes," interviews Hollywood personalities such as Joel Grey, Martin Landau and Carl Reiner on how faith—Judaism in particular—has helped shape their lives.

The new series, each a half-hour, are the latest examples of VISN's "faith and values" TV programming.

Also coming up in April is "In Good Faith," a local panel discussion program produced by ABC affiliate WCVB-TV Boston that VISN has upgraded to a national audience.

The show brings together a weekly panel of experts who take a religious/ethical slant on news and public affairs. They focus on current domestic and international issues, from inner city violence to Soviet politics.

Launched in 1988, VISN, the Vision Interfaith Satellite Network, is backed by a broad spectrum of Christian and Jewish bodies.

VISN was started partly as an answer to the televangelist scandals of the 1980s. Its charter bans fundraising pleas or criticism of other faith groups on the air.

Leaf nutrient program gets $12,000 grant

From News Reports

HARLINGEN, Texas—The Leaf Nutrient Program, an approved project of the Mission Outreach Committee of First United Methodist Church in Harlingen, recently received outside funding for its work.

Rotary International presented a $12,000 check to the project president William Marsh at a recent meeting of the service club.

The check represents the $4,000 gift from Harlingen Rotary Club, $1,000 donation from West Cameron Rotary Club and $1,000 given by the Rotary Club of Saltillo, Mexico.

These funds were matched by a $6,000 grant from Rotary International, making a total of $12,000 given to improve the nutrition of poor, rural children in the state of Coahuila, Mexico, near Saltillo.

The Leaf Nutrient Program, founded in 1985, uses alfalfa extraction machinery developed through research at the University of Wisconsin to provide a safe, nutritious diet supplement to the traditional corn-bean diet of Mexico's poor families.

Projects in five villages are in operation in Coahuila, and this grant will enable 12 to be added during 1991.

Rotary has stipulated that none of its funds can be used for administrative expenses, such as gas and oil for the pickup truck, wages for the graduate student from Antonio Narro Agricultural University in Saltillo who supervises the village operations, funds for planning conferences in Saltillo, etc.

A set of alfalfa extraction machinery is given to a village which has requested it after having seen a demonstration of the process.

The alfalfa is planted, cultivated and harvested by hand.

Then it is washed and processed. The resulting extract is given to each participating family to incorporate into its food as they choose.

Families are taught by Mexican agriculture students and faculty.

Dear Deborah

'Try to understand pressure, stress on pastor'

Dear Deborah:

I just reread your advice to "A Puzzled Pastor" in the Reporter.

What you said was fine, but I wonder why his or her pastoral relations committee, or the official church board, was not handling the problem and taking the heat off the pastor.

I know many pastors have lost favor and their pulpits because they stood up for right principles without the support of the church leadership who agreed with them but would not take a stand.

Another Pastor

Dear Pastor:

You are right. Many times the Pastor Parish Relations Committee will not take a stand.

I know some lay people who say that they have to live there long after the particular pastor is gone.

However, sometimes the committee may not know what is going on and the pastor may be reluctant to confide in them about the situation in the congregation.

In this case, the pastor had the personal problem of freezing which he is experiencing but is unwilling to make public. I tried to address that pastor's need to face the problem personally before taking on the congregation.

I do think every congregation needs to consider the relationship they have with their pastor and to understand the pressures and stress of modern pastoral ministry.

There needs to be mutual trust and respect so that pastor and people can work together to do the work of the church in today's world.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Irish pastor's hymn interweaves writings about Christ

The head that once was crowned
with thorns
Is crowned with glory now;
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty Victor's brow.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

The shame and suffering experienced by Christ and his ultimate victory and eternal glory are clearly set forth in the hymn.

The interweaving of New Testament writings about Christ makes the hymn a magnificent tool for Christians to affirm their faith and to praise Jesus Christ the Savior.

Thomas Kelly, who wrote the hymn, was familiar with classical and Oriental languages. He studied the Bible daily, in Hebrew and Greek, and from his study came hymns with strong biblical truth.

The son of an Irish judge, Kelly was educated at Trinity College in Dublin. He planned to follow his father into the legal profession, but his keen spiritual conviction changed his mind. In 1792 he was ordained in the Church of Ireland.

The spiritual tides of the Irish church were at a low level, and Kelly's evangelical enthusiasm was opposed by his fellow clergymen.

The Archbishop of Dublin forbade him to preach in the churches, and by 1880 he had become an independent minister.

Fortunately, he was a man of considerable means who had married a woman from a wealthy family.

With his own money he built a number of chapels, which he generously supported. For these chapels he published several collections of his hymns.

Kelly was generous and shared of his wealth with the poor. At the time of the Great Famine (1845-49), when thousands died of starvation and fever, he gave unselfishly.

During this time, one man cheered up his wife with the words, "Hold up, Bridget, there's always Mister Kelly to pull us out of the bog after we've sunk for the last time."

Services are still held in one of Kelly's chapels in Ireland, and his hymns that have survived into the last of the 20th century are a tribute to this Irish preacher who lived out his faith magnificently.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"There Is a Name I Love to Hear"

Dulac Community Center

Dulac, Louisiana

Native American Awareness Sunday
April 14, 1991

If anyone would like to have information concerning work with Native Americans to add to a worship service, please contact the Reverend Rob Thompson, P.O. Box 101, Dulac, LA 70383; (504) 563-7483.

PRESENT STAFF
ROBIN K. THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARY M. BERGERON, CHILD ADVOCACY
CORINE PAULK, GIRL'S CLUB COORDINATOR
BERNADINE FANGUY, GIRL'S CLUB AIDE
CYNTHIA GREGOIRE, SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK
ELVIS BILLIOT, GROUNDS KEEPER

Dedication Scheduled

The dedication of the new facility at the Dulac Community Center will take place Saturday, May 11, 1991.

Spring Brings New Life!

With the coming of spring, comes the budding of new life. The trees bud forth with new leaves. The green grass bursts forth casting away the brown of winter. In Dulac, Louisiana there will be something else bursting forth this spring! It will be a new beginning for the Dulac Community Center. For the past five-and-a-half years, the Community Center has been in a semi-dormant stage, not like in past seasons, when it was bursting forth with many programs, serving many individuals living within the Dulac and Grand Caillou communities. During more recent times, the Center's operations have been reduced to programs that could be performed out of the office/apartment, following the resulting flood waters of Hurricane Juan in October of 1985.

BUT, with the coming of spring, new life comes with a new multi-purpose building and a completely renovated recreational building. The renovations and expansion of the facilities are the work and efforts of many individuals who have labored long hours and have overcome obstacle after obstacle. The funding for the renovation and expansion project has been a result of the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries. This spring, the Center will be budding and "putting out" new growth and programs, much of which will begin shortly after moving in.

More about the new building and the new programs later, first, picture this in your mind. Jesus told His disciples, "You shall be witnesses unto me ... unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Jesus was referring to Dulac, Louisiana. Dulac fits the criteria for being the uttermost part of the earth. The Webster's New World Dictionary defines the meaning of uttermost or utmost as being, "situated at the farthest point or limit; most extreme or distant; farthest." Dulac is the ending point of several roads running between and over bayous before ending at the marshes. For many, Dulac has seemed to be the end of the earth and has become the refuge of many who have sought isolation from the rest of the world, namely the Houma Indians. For some, Dulac is the place their families have lived for decades or even a century, and they too will live their lives, some by only mere existence. For others, it is the "stepping off" place for the Gulf of Mexico. Along the lengthy drive south of Houma, much of what one would see are beautiful shrimp and fishing boats, disguising many of the apparent needs of those living along the bayous.

Methodist work in this bayou region began in 1882, when George C. Cragem, on behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, purchased a plot of land measuring some 40 acres. The use of this parcel of land enabled the Houma Indians a place to tie their house boats during non-trapping seasons. This marked the beginning of an important era in which many have contributed sacrificially and have personally persevered for this mission endeavor. A Methodist Mission was established some time later and is now known as Clanton Chapel United Methodist Church.

In the early 1930's, Miss Ella Hooper, a teacher at what is known now as MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services, Inc. in Houma, saw the need to provide education for Native American children along the bayous at Dulac. The Indian children were not allowed to attend public school at the time. In 1932, Miss Wilhelmina Hooper, Miss Ella's sister, started a school for these Native American children that became later a project of the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries. Miss Wilhelmina spent 43 years serving the children within the Dulac area. After the children were allowed to attend their own public Indian school through the eighth grade, the Mission School adjusted its focus and began meeting the social service needs of the community. In 1970, when the Indian children were allowed to attend the integrated public schools, the Center was challenged "to provide social services to the people of the Dulac — Grand Caillou community ... for the enrichment of their lives through Christian principles, the development of democratic leadership, the promotion of education, and for strengthened family and community life." became what is known today as the Dulac Community Center.

The Center is presently a project related to the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries for the United Methodist Church. The buildings and grounds are owned by the Women's Division of the General Board. The Center is a federally recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization which is governed by a extremely active Board of Directors, made up of fifteen members and six active ex-officio members. The Members of the Board are made up of a cross section of equal portions representing the Methodist Church, the community (contingency) served, and the community at large. Many of the board members are from accomplished or professional fields bringing their skills, abilities, and expertise into the realm of decision making.

The Center has for its primary goal to provide social services to the disadvantaged, low-income population of the Dulac area. Many of the programs are directed to the Houmas Indian, due to their large number within the Dulac area, but the programs are open to anyone living in the vicinity of the Center. The Center's main purpose is to seek ways in meeting the social, emotional, economical, and physical needs of the people. At the Center, our emphasis is placed on the individual, rather than the programs. Our primary focuses have been placed upon children, women, and families, and will remain so. Working through the various programs at the Center, our objective is to produce an individual who is empowered, inspired, and enabled to be all that God has intended and created him or her to be.

Background Information For Programs Carried Out By The Center

The Dulac Community Center serves all of the Dulac and Grand Caillou, Louisiana area. Dulac is located on the Bayou Grand Caillou at the southern end of Terrebonne Parish at the edge of the bayou marshes. The Dulac Community is both geographically and socially isolated. The nearest licensed day care center, doctor, dentist, hospital, social service agency, or shopping center are in excess of 20 miles away. Few small businesses line the road leading through the Dulac Community. There is no public transit system available, leaving the poor, minority population of this section of the parish without any feasible or dependable means of transportation over these great distances.

Although the Center strives to meet the needs of the entire population of the Dulac Community, it was founded to serve the Native American uneducated and poor. Many of the poor and disadvantaged within the area are classified as being Native American. Many living within the Dulac area are underemployed, undereducated, and live at or below poverty level. The emphasis employed by the Center is to motivate children for the school readiness and then while in school help them complete their education. The Center, through the new programs being planned, will become more effective in reaching and meeting the needs of the community.

Program Information

The Center's primary goal is to meet the educational, economic, and social needs of the Dulac Community in an effort to develop community pride, self-reliance, self-sufficiency. The purpose of the Center is to improve the overall quality of life and prepare the people of Dulac to function more effectively in the mainstream community. Both the goal and the purpose can and will be implemented through the initiating of new programs at the Center.

During 1991 and 1992, having completed the renovation and the expansion of the facilities, it is planned to offer a wide range of programs to the community. The areas of concentration addressed are: education, recreation, social services, and programs will be put in place.

Brief Synopsis Of Programs And Overall Goals For Each:

Community Girl's Club

The Community Girl's Club has been in existence for over four years and has been well received by the teenage girls in the area. The overall goals of Girl's Club are: 1) to help adolescent girls develop a better sense of self-esteem, self-sufficiency, motivation and leadership, and 2) to give them an optimistic view of the future to make them aware of their responsibilities to themselves and to their community in order to fit into mainstream of life.

New Director

There is something else new this spring for the Center. It is the Center's new Executive Director, Robin K. Thompson. "Mr. Rob" is not exactly new any more; he started his duties on November 1, 1990. Mr. Thompson is a native of Anniston, Alabama but has been in Louisiana since 1977. He is married to the former Gayle Bankston of Zachary, Louisiana. They have three girls; Kristi, 9; Jessica, 6; Robyn, 18 months; and another child due any day now.

Mr. Thompson brings to the position over 19 years of experience in working with youth, children and churches. He is an ordained Baptist minister, holding degrees from Clarke College in Newton, Mississippi, Mobile College in Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana. He is presently pursuing a Master's degree in Counseling.

Mr. Thompson says that his current position is a combination of all his work experience, both church and non-church related, rolled into one. When asked in regard to working with a Methodist institution, Thompson replies, "It has been pretty interesting so far." "Some of my compatibility and flexibility comes from the fact that some of my ancestry served as ministers within the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Reformed churches." "Our basic treatise is that we make the attempt to meet the needs of the individual, in keeping with the Jesus' decree — feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked; and come to the aid of the sick, imprisoned, or homeless." "That is why I am at Dulac — I'm serving as an extension of your ministry to those who are hurting!"

Child Advocacy Program

The Child Advocacy Program has been in existence for three years and maintains a high degree of popularity among its clients. The overall goal for the Child Advocacy Program is to meet with parents in the community to discuss and present information in regard to more effective methods of parenting and dealings with family issues. Topics covered include: child abuse, discipline, family communication, school drop outs, drug and alcohol abuse, health, exercise and more.

The Renovation And Expansion Project Of The Facilities

In the Fall of 1986, the Woman's Division set aside money for the renovation and expansion of our Community Center. The buildings, being occupied by the Center, had all but been destroyed by Hurricane Juan in 1985. July 1990, a ground breaking ceremony was held for the new multi-purpose building. The Center will be able to occupy this beautiful new facility during the Spring of 1991.

Construction continues on the new multi-purpose building and the renovated recreation building. Financial assistance is needed to furnish and equip these buildings to meet the needs of our people. In addition, volunteer labor is needed to assist in renovations of a remaining damaged building. A detailed list has been formulated of the needed equipment and repairs. This list is available upon request. If interested, please call (504) 563-7483.

Rooms in our multi-purpose building can be dedicated in the memory or in honor of someone demonstrating the true mission spirit. Special attention will be shown to those of whom who have sacrificed their time, efforts, and contributions for the plight of the disadvantaged population, including the Native Americans.

Adult and Summer Youth Work Projects have been utilized very effectively in the past. A greater degree of need is apparent in the present. Work camps can assist in Super Summer Enrichment Programs, in home repairs, in the continued renovation of our old buildings and staff housing, and by placing the finishing touches on our new multi-purpose building.

Emergency Food Bank

The overall goal for the Emergency Food Bank is to provide basic foods for a family for a week in the case of an emergency, loss of wages, or the lapse in time for food stamps. The bulk of the food is provided through Terrebonne Churches United and we serve as a site distribution center.

The exterior of the new multi-purpose program activity building.

The interior of one of the classrooms/dining areas.

The exterior of the renovated recreational facility.

The following programs will be placed into action as funds become available:

* Day Care and Early Childhood Development (Pre-School) Program
* Adult Education Program
* Children's Summer Enrichment and Recreation Program
* MEETSE-Youth Enrichment Program
* Children's After School Enrichment Program
* Head Start Program
* Senior Adult Program

Additional programs are being considered at this time to begin in the near future, such as: a *Case Management Program, Home Repair and Weatherization, Arts and Crafts Programs, Economic Development Programs,* and so on.

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Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

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Resurrection Abounds!

A somewhat cynical pastor gave me a verbal lesson on Louisiana religiosity soon after I moved into the state. He said Louisiana has five seasons: football season, duck season, deer season, basketball season, and Mardi Gras. Perhaps so. Advent, Christmastide, Epiphany, Lent, Eastertide, and Pentecost may be outdated. But I don't think so!

Congregations all over Louisiana are basking in the glow, the glory, and the grandeur of Easter celebrations. Shivering worshipers — anticipating the sunrise — and hungering pilgrims all sang alleluias, affirmed the creeds, heard the Word proclaimed, and shared in various ways the good news, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Lent (the 40 days before Easter, excluding Sundays) is not just a season, it is a state of mind and soul. Lent is a time of acknowledging the valleys and shadows of both life and death. Anxieties and fears overwhelm us. Social problems consume and paralyze us. Lent is a time of facing the avalanche of causes and concerns that devour us and deciding once again what it means to follow Jesus as His disciples. It is a time of discarding unnecessary baggage; a time of spring-cleaning of our spirits.

Then comes Easter. The cross does not have the last word. We are not alone. Thanks be to God who has given us the victory in Jesus Christ! The valleys do not last. The shadows are not eternal. God has the last word, and that word is resurrection, new life, a renewed creation.

Resurrection abounds!

William B. Oden

Dillard University Breaks Ground for New Communications Center

Dillard University held a groundbreaking ceremony on March 22 for a $6.325 million Fine Arts and Communications Center projected to be completed by the fall of 1992.

The 50,000-square foot building is being constructed just east of Stern Hall on Dillard University's campus.

Dillard University President Samuel DuBois Cook said the new building is a representation of Dillard University's commitment to excellence.

"The Fine Arts and Communications Center reflects the mission, needs and priorities of Dillard in terms of facilities to accommodate, enhance and strengthen the quality of our educational programs, processes and products," Dr. Cook said. "It is designed to meet not only current realities, but projections in terms of enrollment in the various areas, majors, services, courses and expansion."

The Fine Arts and Communications Center will provide new and efficient space for the University's art, drama, mass communications and music programs, and appropriate office space. The Mathes Group served as project architects.

Clifford V. Johnson, Dillard University Vice President for Development, said the center opens innovative ways for the community to make financial gifts to the University. A gift catalog will soon be distributed explaining ways alumni, friends and corporations may contribute, and have their generosity widely appreciated and recognized.

"We think the new center is a great asset to the community and Dillard University has long proven that it is an economic and cultural force to be reckoned with. We've proven we're an asset in the community," Johnson said.

The gift catalogs will be mailed this spring to alumni, University friends and potential financial sponsors.

Pictured during the groundbreaking ceremony of the new center are: l. to r., Dillard University President, Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook, and University Board of Trustees Member, Lester E. Kabacoff, holding ceremonial shovels. Also shown are other members of Administrative Council and staff.

1992 Page and Marshal Applications Invited

United Methodists wanting to serve as pages and marshals at the 1992 session of their church's top legislative assembly here have been invited to submit applications.

Both clergy and laypersons are eligible. The Reverend Mark R. Wharff, Stockton, California, chairman of marshals and pages, said about 150 volunteers will be chosen.

Marshals and pages serve at their own expense, but an offering will be taken during the meeting to defray part of their costs. The General Conference will be in session May 5-15, 1992, in the Commonwealth Convention Center in Louisville.

Applications should be sent to the Rev. Mark R. Wharff, Holy Cross United Methodist Church, 1200 West Hammer Lane, Stockton, CA 95209. Persons selected will be notified near the end of 1991.

United Methodist Foundation special on page 6. (page 5 in local editions)

New Ministry Coming to Local University

The Reverend Jim Wilson, minister of Wesley Foundation and Northeast United Campus Ministries (NEUCM) on the Northeast Louisiana University campus in Monroe, has announced the merger of the ministries and the creation of a new entity: Northeast Campus Ministry, which will combine the two. Wesley Foundation and NEUCM will cease to maintain separate boards of directors and all functions of both will be combined under the Northeast Campus Ministry board.

The merger was voted on at a joint meeting of the Wesley and NEUCM boards on February 21, and has been approved by the United Methodist Church, which will retain ownership of the Wesley facility; and the Presbytery of the Pines, which will retain ownership of the former Westminster House, the location of the ministry's day care facility. The Wesley Foundation was a unit of the United Methodist Church, while NEUCM was funded primarily by the Presbyterian Church USA. The new ministry will be ecumenical in nature and funding. It will continue to be based in the Wesley Foundation facility at 112 Delano Drive.

Wilson said that although the program of the two former campus ministry units merged several years ago, both boards continued to operate separately. The merger is expected to streamline financial and administrative functions.

"There will be no change in the emphasis of the ministry or in our day-to-day operations," Wilson emphasized. "Northeast Campus Ministry will continue to offer worship opportunities, religious education events, issue exploration, a child care and development center for children of college students, counseling, drama, an art gallery and concern for the entire campus."

He added, "This merger demonstrates that God's people can work closely together, maintaining their uniqueness while affirming the faith of those who have a radically differing emphasis."

Persons — Churches — Events

Members of **LeJeune UMC** helped Fannie Jackson celebrate her 91st birthday. Ms. Jackson is one of the oldest members of the church. The Reverend Clarence Hillard is pastor.

* * *

Lucy Erickson, a long-time member of **Holly Grove UMC**, Leesville, was recently honored by the Women's Auxiliary of the American Legion Post Number 387, as the Outstanding Citizen of the Year for Vernon Parish. This award was based on her total commitment to both the community and to her church. The Reverend Lewis L. Olmsted is pastor of Holly Grove.

* * *

Mount Zion UMC in New Orleans held its annual revival in March. The theme for this year's service was, "Are We Moving as God's Excited Disciples?" (Matthew 28:18-20). The Reverend Alonzo J. Campbell from Slidell was the guest speaker. Mr. and Mrs. Luther Speight Sr. were Chairpersons on Evangelism and the Reverend Leslie P. Norris is pastor.

* * *

First UMC in Lake Charles will present Carlo Curley, an internationally-acclaimed concert organist and entertainer, in concert April 14 at 4 p.m. at First Church. Curley's repertoire is well represented with the masterworks of Bach, Handel, and Mozart. Well-known classics from the Romantic Era, Sousa's Marches and Scott Joplin's Ragtime are also included in his program selections. The performance is presented to the public free of charge in conjunction with the 120th Anniversary Celebration of First Church. The Reverend Grayson Watson is pastor.

* * *

St. James and Round Grove UMC's of the Shreveport District recently held special anniversary services. They are two of the oldest United Methodist churches in the District. Round Grove was founded 115 years ago and St. James was founded 127 years ago. The Reverend Arnold Vestal Brown is pastor of the two churches.

Around the Conference

University UMC in Baton Rouge is currently celebrating its golden anniversary. The church is offering for sale beautiful commemorative calendars depicting 50 years of church history. Presenting Bishop William B. Oden with a calendar are Elizabeth Gibbens and Mildred Caldwell. Mrs. Gibbens, along with her husband, S. Pendery Gibbens Jr., chairs the Golden Anniversary committee and Mrs. Caldwell serves on the calendar committee with Pattie Bankston.

Pictured is a floral arrangement called "Operation Desert Shield," which was placed in the sanctuary of Boeuf Prairie UMC, Fort Necessity, prior to the beginning of "Operation Desert Storm." The arrangement was made by Mrs. Gloria Kosmac, a member of the congregation. The cattails represent missiles.

Mission Sunday, celebrated recently at Blackwater UMC in Baker, was truly a special day to remember, as Sunday School classes joined together with the choir, Children's Church, UMW, and the entire congregation, carrying out the theme, "Go Ye Into All the World" (Mark 16:15).

Pharr Chapel UMC's United Methodist Youth recently held a Dog Wash to raise money for its group. Flea shampoo was donated by Dr. Karen Ordogne and the Morgan City Veterinary Hospital.

Recently, Munholland UMC in Metairie purchased a new car for the Spanish Ministry of New Orleans. The Spanish Ministry is an outreach missions area supported by Munholland. Pictured are: Jeanette Cothren, Missions Coordinator; the Reverend Marta Sanfiel, pastor of St. Marks UMC and the Spanish Ministry; and the Reverend Bobby Potter, pastor of Munholland.

Shown are members of Maplewood UMC in Sulphur as they celebrate the dedication of the church's bell and wind chimes. The old church bell was in the original church building and kept protected for the new building. Now members have on the grounds a reminder of days gone by. The group used letting go of balloons as a symbol of freedom and celebration in the Lord.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

The President, religion and us

Two factors generally have stifled public discussion of spiritual matters by occupants of the White House:

■ Concerns about church-state separation;

■ A prevailing attitude that "religion is a private affair."

Hence, President Bush's recent public statements regarding his identity as a person of faith are particularly noteworthy.

"I am a Christian," Mr. Bush told a group of religious journalists (see UMR, April 5).

He said that he was very emphatic about upholding the constitutional prohibition against conferring governmental preference on one religious group over another.

But he was equally forthright in stating that he and his wife regularly attend public worship services and try to "set an example" for the rest of the country in that respect.

"I'm still trying to sort out this heretofore very personal area of my life," the President said about his efforts to relate his faith to his responsibilities as an elected official.

But, he added, he wanted to convey as effectively as possible "that we are 'one nation under God.' "

We applaud such straight talk by our nation's chief executive about his religious identity and convictions.

An open witness by the world's most powerful political leader about where he is "coming from" morally and spiritually is far preferable to hiding behind a shallow appeal to privacy or church-state separation.

It's also more honest than merely tipping his hat to a vague and insipid "religion in general" as some predecessors in the Oval Office have done.

Whether or not he intended it as such, Mr. Bush's frank confession that he is a Christian presents at least two related challenges to the rest of us.

Challenge #1: How can we best link our dual identities as people of faith and as citizens of our country?

As Christian citizens, we live with the frustration of being bearers of a witness—to the reign of God—that cannot be fully expressed through imperfect social structures and institutions.

We must boldly accept our responsibility to be "in" but not "of" the world. But we must do so in ways that "connect" with a society that doesn't reflect much concrete awareness of living "under God."

Challenge #2: How should we deal with the President and other elected office holders who claim, as we do, an identity as Christians?

In too many cases we perpetuate a "religion is private" attitude toward our faith by not holding public officials who are professing Christians accountable to Christian norms.

By identifying himself as a Christian, Mr. Bush implicitly has invited us to do what we're mandated to do with regard to other brothers and sisters in the faith: pray for him by name and hold him personally to the same moral and spiritual standards as any other Christian.

We should actively accept that "invitation." We should do likewise with all elected officials who identify themselves as Christians.

WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY CAROL T. POWERS

President Bush, meeting recently with religious journalists, spoke candidly about his Christian identity and convictions. We applaud such straight talk by our nation's chief executive.

A good resource for conveying concerns

A frequent impediment to communicating our prayers and concerns to elected officials, including the President, is lack of familiarity with "how to do it" (see preceding editorial).

Help exists.

Specifically, we recommend that every congregation and/or church member obtain a copy of the "Congressional Directory and Action Guide."

It includes practical tips about how to communicate with elected officials, provides addresses and telephone numbers for the three branches of the federal government, and lists the names and religious affiliation of all members of the U.S. Congress.

For information, write United Methodism's General Board of Church and Society, 100 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

Letters to the Editor

All sides on abortion issue must cease simplification

The March 22 article headlined, "Durham Declaration urges anti-abortion stand," prompted this letter.

There is no doubt that the Durham group is composed of sincere United Methodists who wish to witness to their strong opinion about abortion. I am somewhat impressed by those who have signed the declaration.

Of course, they are entitled to their conviction that "it is a sin to take this child's life . . ." Quite a categorical statement, but terribly simplistic for such a complex problem.

I wish the "pro-life" people in their sincerity were as categorical in their concern for all children. I hear few expressions of concern and see little evidence of action for those children (and their parents) born into situations where there is no hope for them to find fulfillment in any sense of the word, and who will, in fact face abuse, disease, poverty, and neglect.

Both "pro-life" and "pro-choice" persons trouble me with their simplistic and self-righteous proclamations and actions. If they wish to alienate people, they are succeeding. If they wish to get others to consider their stance, they will have to move beyond their simplistic stances.

Earl D. Biggers
Chula Vista, California

It's a woman's choice

The "Durham Declaration" which urges an anti-abortion stand and considers abortion a sin is signed by eight men (see UMR, March 22).

How interesting, when one considers it is the woman who carries the baby, delivers it, and nurtures it to adulthood. It is strictly a woman's choice whether she has an unwanted baby or decides to have an abortion under proper medical procedures.

Verna T. Varney
Melrose, Massachusetts

New priorities needed

I like the United Methodist principle of theological pluralism. I believe the people who back the Durham Declaration are sincere and of good faith (see UMR, March 22).

However, it is my opinion that they are wrong in forcing a narrow view on the rest of us who share United Methodism with them. Yes, abortion is a tragedy, but I cannot deny that option to any woman since none of us can know the personal circumstances which brought her to consider such an action.

Let us not judge these women, instead let us seek to reorder our nation's priorities so these women won't feel abortion is the only solution.

Bernice Burr-Wilken
Holyoke, Colorado

Column affirmed

Three cheers for Gregory Van Dussen's article about Northern Ireland in a recent "My Witness" column (see UMR, March 15).

I was the pastor of the Dundrum, Downpatrick, Newcastle Circuit in County Down, Northern Ireland for over 12 months in 1985-86.

Mr. Van Dussen must have seen the Mountains of Mourne where I preached every Sunday and he must have caught a glimpse of the beauty of the people.

Since my return to the U.S., I have given countless programs dispelling the myth that Northern Ireland is a dangerous place to live or visit. Thanks also to the United Methodist Council of Bishops for initiating a Day of Prayer for Ireland on March 17. Do it again!

Jerre W. Nolte
Winfield, Kansas

They're Christians!

The question was raised in the March 22 issue, "What term should be used by United Methodists when referring to racially ethnic persons in the church?"

The answer is easy: "Christian!" Paul's letter to the Galatians (3:28) states it very well. "So there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus."

Lorrie Foster
The Woodlands, Texas

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Luke 16:31)

Readings for week of April 15

Monday: Psalms 4:1-3
Tuesday: Psalms 4:4-8
Wednesday: Acts 3:1-10
Thursday: Acts 3:11-19
Friday: Luke 24:13-27
Saturday: Luke 24:28-48
Sunday: 1 John 3:1-7

My Witness

How should I have responded to expletive?

By REVA JANE BEADLING

It happened so quickly! While waiting my turn to be served in a store, a clerk asked the man standing next to me to sign a paper.

"Jesus Christ!" he exclaimed.

Taken aback, I turned my head to look at him. Our eyes met briefly. His were troubled eyes, sad eyes, angry eyes.

What did he see in mine? Pity? Disapproval? Concern?

"I'm only following a store rule, sir," was the clerk's calm statement.

"Your signature on the paper shows I gave you cash from my register as a refund." He had affixed his signature by now, received the cash and hurried away.

But the name of our Saviour was used in a derogatory manner as an expletive. I love my Lord, yet I spoke not a word to this upset person beside me, to whom the name of Jesus appeared to mean little.

Yet why did he call on Him in anger? Some people say God's name in the same tone of voice. He had learned the name long years ago in Sunday school or church?

What should have been my response? Could I have said, "Oh, you know Jesus, too?" Or, "Your use of Jesus' name in that manner offends me," or "Is Jesus your friend that you call His name?"

Has something similar ever happened to you? How did you respond? What *should* our response, as Christians, be?

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Reva Jane Beadling is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Scottdale, Pa. (Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Faithfully yours

White House visit fed, eased fear of 'sellout'

As cameras whirred, I sat down in a burgundy-leather chair beside the President of the United States.

Stephen Swecker

No, this was no "power trip" fantasy. I was actually at the White House—sitting so close to the President, in fact, that you couldn't have thrown a cat between us, as my West Virginia cousins would say.

A mere 72 hours earlier, a White House media relations official had called and invited me to meet with the President. I would be part of a 15-member group of religious journalists, she explained, for a 45-minute, on-the-record, no-holds-barred news conference.

Mixed feelings of elation and fear surged through me during the next two days as I awaited the most improbable meeting of my life.

Inside the White House, as my 14 media colleagues and I waited by our chairs for Mr. Bush's entrance, I brooded about concerns beyond the meeting itself.

Words like "sell-out" and "compromise" pounded inside my head. I wondered: Would the exhilaration of having sat literally at the President's side cloud my ability to be fair and impartial in assessing his performance as a public leader?

Could I trust myself?

Could I trust myself to separate personal feelings about the President from my vocational and prophetic duty as a Christian minister to "speak truth to power"?

Thankfully, the next 45 minutes helped to allay my anxieties.

President Bush entered the meeting room briskly, shook our hands and warmly welcomed each of us to the White House. As we took our seats around a rectangular table, his relaxed manner eased our tension.

Most importantly, he was refreshingly convincing in his identification of himself as a Christian who cares about the moral and spiritual examples that he and his wife set as the nation's first family.

I believed him and was grateful when he said that he values the involvement of religious leaders in "reasoned dialogue" about public policy, including their conscientious expressions of dissent.

Soon afterwards, as my flight sped homeward, I was weary yet invigorated. The Maundy Thursday worship service that I was to lead that evening loomed ahead.

Awareness dawned on me

Suddenly, like an unexpected gift, an awareness dawned on me that, war and world unrest notwithstanding, signs of the Resurrection hope still can be glimpsed.

Namely, as long as there are world leaders such as Mr. Bush and others who grapple with their Christian faith as they perform their public duties, God has potent channels for raising up a more just and peaceful world.

Back home now, I'm grateful for friends who regularly remind me that such a vision of the "new creation" is ill served if any of us "sells out" our Christian witness for political power or any other reason.

I pray that the President himself also has friends—including his fellow strugglers in the Body of Christ—who regularly remind him of that truth.

—STEPHEN L. SWECKER

Mr. Swecker is Faith Forum Page editor for the Reporter.

What others are saying

"To be blessed by God is a dangerous thing. It is in the very nature of blessing, of being touched by the power of love, of being strengthened by the wellspring of justice, that those who have the audacity to seek divine blessing, even to wrestle with angels and demand it, must take the consequences."

—Rev. Carter Heyward in "Christian Social Action"

* * *

"If you talk about justice, that's OK. It's Jesus people don't want you to talk about."

—Prof. Stanley Hauerwas, ethicist, Duke University Divinity School

* * *

"There is a constant tension between being and doing. Jesus said, 'Come unto me and I will give you rest,' but He also said, 'Go . . . make disciples.' . . . What if we are called to both being and doing? What if prayer without programming leads to a selfish religion and programming without prayer leads to shallow do-goodism? What if our worship and our witnessing cannot really be separated in a wholistic faith?"

—United Methodist Bishop William B. Oden, Louisiana Area

* * *

"We cannot flinch from our responsibility to widen the circle of tolerance. For the true evil of discrimination is not in the choice of groups to hate but in the fact that a group is chosen at all."

—New York City Mayor David N. Dinkins

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

WINNING DOESN'T HURT: The dean of United Methodist-related Duke Divinity School, the Rev. Dennis Campbell, is willing to give the university's successful basketball program some credit for the increases in enrollment experienced by the school in the past five years. In that time, Coach Mike Krzyzewski's Blue Devils have made the "Final Four" four times, losing twice in the final game before winning the tournament April 1 over the University of Kansas. Dr. Campbell said he couldn't completely ascribe the 26 percent increase in the number of applications for next year's incoming class to the basketball program, "but it certainly doesn't hurt."

UM THEOLOGIAN SHOT: The Rev. J. Robert Nelson, prominent United Methodist theologian and director of the Institute of Religion at Texas Medical Center, suffered a non-fatal bullet wound to the head April 2. Houston police suspect a disgruntled former employee of the Institute as the assailant. The Rev. Julian Byrd, manager of pastoral services at Methodist Hospital, said Dr. Nelson apparently has no paralysis from the wound and is able to speak. "His recovery is remarkable," Mr. Byrd said. Dr. Nelson is an expert in medical ethics and genetic engineering. He's also a longtime ecumenist who has attended every World Council of Churches meeting since the WCC's founding in 1948, including the recent Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia (see UMR, Feb. 22).

Robert Nelson

FORMER SENATOR KILLED: A twin-engine commuter plane carrying former Sen. John Tower, his daughter, Marian, and at least 21 others, crashed and burned while trying to land near Brunswick, Ga., April 5. All aboard were reported killed. A member of Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas, Sen. Tower was on a tour to promote his new book, "Consequences: A Personal and Political Memoir." The senator, son of a longtime Methodist pastor, the Rev. Joe Z. Tower, served from 1961-1985.

CAMPAIGN BEGINS: A program to begin 15,000 churches in 10 years was begun at the spring meeting of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta. The plan calls for starting four new churches a day. Currently, Southern Baptists say they launch just over three churches per day. If successful, the program will help the denomination reach its stated goal of 50,000 new churches and missions by the year 2000. There are about 43,420 Southern Baptist churches and missions in the United States.

UM walks in space—again

Air Force Lt. Col. Jerry Ross, veteran astronaut and active United Methodist layman, walked in space recently to help deploy the Gamma Ray Observatory, the largest non-military payload in the history of the U.S. space program. The observatory will explore gamma ray sources throughout the universe. This was the third space walk for Mr. Ross, a member of Friendswood United Methodist Church, Houston.

8 of 10 Americans claim to be Christians

Largest-yet national survey assesses religion alongside other demographics

By GARY O'GUINN
Religious News Service

NEW YORK—More than 86 percent of Americans asked to identify their religion claimed to be Christian, while only one out of seven said they had no religion at all.

These are findings of a new study that is considered significant because of its unusually large sampling.

In the survey directed by two researchers at the City University of New York, 113,000 adults across the continental United States were asked, "What is your religion?"

The results detail how people perceive their religious identity in relation to where they live and 17 other categories, including education level, age, race, marital status and political persuasion.

According to the survey, the largest block of Americans, 26.2 percent or 46 million of the 175,440,000 Americans over 18, say they are Roman Catholic.

About 60.3 percent, or 105.7 million, identify themselves as Protestant, with most of those respondents further specifying a particular denomination.

Respondents who identified themselves as Baptist (19.4 percent/33.9 million), Methodist (8 percent/14.1 million) and Lutheran (5.2 percent/9.1 million) constituted the major groupings after Catholics.

The sociologist in charge of the 13-month project said the new study provides the first comprehensive and detailed religious profile of modern American society.

Researcher Barry Kosmin said the study indicates that religious identity is just as important to Americans as race or ethnic roots in defining how they see themselves.

Only 2.2 percent of those surveyed, representing a little over four million of the population, refused to identify a religious preference in the survey, while 7.5 percent, 13.1 million, said they had no religion.

The study categorizes major Protestant traditions in denominational "families."

For instance, a figure of 33.9 million Baptists includes American Baptists, black Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Orthodox respondents were included in similar family groups.

The surveyors were more interested in finding out how Americans perceived their religious identity than in investigating sizes of denominations, Dr. Kosmin said.

Religious identification questions tend to produce figures different from church-generated membership rolls for a variety of reasons, he explained, but said those differences do not constitute a "contradiction."

Besides using different criteria to count members, Dr. Kosmin said, "churches take a snapshot in time. This is a much broader brush. They've got the snapshot, we've got the movie."

The question of religious identification has never been on a U.S. census because of concerns over government/religion entanglement, said Dr. Kosmin, a British-trained demographer who studied at the University of London.

"It was the one thing missing. No one has really asked a large number of Americans what their religious identification was" since 1957.

Other data prove interesting

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—A major new poll on the religious identity of Americans came up with some findings that counter conventional wisdom and shed light on some lesser known groups.

Following are some findings in addition to those on age, education, race, ethnic origin, politics and marital status:

✓ Compared with the national average, twice as many people in the Western states reported no religion.

✓ Half of the Americans who claim Irish roots are Protestant. A third of those with Irish roots say they are Catholic.

✓ Half of the 1.5 million Arab-Americans are Christian, including most of those of Lebanese and Iraqi descent. Most Asian-Americans are not Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim—they're Christian, especially Catholic and Baptist.

✓ Jews and Baptists are the most likely to be Democrats. Jews are the most urban-based group, while Baptists are more rural than any other religious group.

✓ Greater percentages of people with no religion stay single. Greek Orthodox have the lowest rate of divorce, Unitarians the highest. Roman Catholics run about even with mainstream Protestants.

✓ Hindus and Jews, in that order, have the highest percentage of college graduates. Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptists and Pentecostals have the lowest.

✓ The average age of a Presbyterian is 48.2 years, followed by Methodists at 48. Of the major denominational families, Pentecostals are the youngest, just under 40.

✓ Presbyterians (2.6), Methodists and Jews (2.7) have the lowest average size households.

Church workers' health insurance costs threaten to outstrip pensions

United Methodist News Service

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—Medical expense insurance for your congregation's pastor and lay employees may soon outstrip what is being paid into their retirement benefit programs.

That sobering news about how health-care costs are "eating alive" local-church and annual conference budgets is the latest report from a denomination-wide task force studying the impact of continually increasing health insurance costs on The United Methodist Church.

The "huge amount of money" now being spent "has the potential of swallowing us up," said Robert W. Stevens of Seattle.

Mr. Stevens, treasurer of the Pacific-Northwest Annual Conference, is vice president of the General Board of Pensions and chairs the board's Health Insurance Task Force.

Preliminary results of task force findings are being shared with annual conference officials at a series of regional meetings this spring.

Detailed recommendations will be made to the pensions board July 16-18 in Boston. Proposals will be prepared at the July meeting for consideration by the 1992 General Conference.

Mr. Stevens told Pensions directors recently that in 1990, the 72 annual conferences in the United States and Puerto Rico deposited more than $125 million into retirement accounts of the church's clergy and lay employees.

In contrast, a special report in the Reporter last year showed that annual conferences and general agencies were paying upwards of $100 million for health insurance (see UMR, May 25, 1990).

The Reporter's special report showed that the rapid rate of increase in health insurance rates over 1988-90—an average of 30 percent compounded annually—severely cut into annual conferences' ability to fund mission and ministry in their areas.

In addition, the experience of the North Central New York Annual Conference showed that an average annual increase in health insurance costs of 30 percent is anticipated through 1995.

The church's experience, the special report said, is a microcosm of the effect rapidly rising health insurance costs are having all across the United States.

All annual conferences—which have the responsibility for administering health insurance for ordained ministers and some church workers—are using many techniques to try to hold down costs. Among these are such things as having ordained ministers, church workers or local congregations pay larger shares of their health insurance premiums.

However, the Reporter's special package of stories said, there seems to be no way for the church by itself to stop continued health insurance cost increases.

To do so will require some major nationwide response to the continuing upward spiral of health care costs, the report said.

Mr. Stevens said recently that the health insurance task force's recommendations won't stop continued increases. Instead, the proposals are expected to call for more uniform benefits. He told the Reporter last year that such a proposal may help spread the liability and thereby slow the rate of cost increase somewhat.

Associate Editor Cynthia B. Astle contributed to this report.

Pensions fund has 'grim year'

United Methodist News Service

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—The year 1990 was "the grimmest year" in a decade of investments for retirement funds for United Methodist clergy and lay workers.

Even then, the rate of return on church retirement funds exceeded most popular market indices, said Edward A. Benson of San Antonio, Texas.

Mr. Benson, an investment adviser, gave that report to the 32 lay and clergy General Board of Pensions directors at their recent meeting.

The portfolio managed by the board realized a return of only 1.5 percent for the year, compared with an annualized return of 11.9 percent for the past three years, and 11.3 percent for the past five years.

Reserves were drawn on to credit the guaranteed 6.5 percent annual rate to accounts of individuals. The rate of interest credited has ranged as high as 18 percent for some years during the 1980s.

Total market value of the pensions portfolio passed $4 billion in February. It has continued to hover there as the market has fluctuated in response to news from the Persian Gulf.

"For the stock market the war marks the transition from the profligate 1980s to slow growth for the 1990s," said James K. Hotchkiss, the board's investment consultant.

Where the market goes from here depends on whether we "win the peace" and on consumer confidence in the economy, he added.

Market watchers expect that consumers "will start to go back into stores" now that the war is over, Mr. Hotchkiss told the board.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Wesley remembered

LONDON—Flowers are placed on the tomb of John Wesley, founder of Methodism, during ceremonies marking the 200th anniversary of his death on March 2, 1791.

UM-related Africa school gala to raise major gifts

United Methodist News Service

HOUSTON—A major gifts campaign to endow scholarships for students at United Methodism's proposed Africa University will be launched in Houston May 4 at a gala event attended by church, government and educational leaders from at least six countries.

The first private degree-granting university built by the church on the African continent will be located at Old Mutare, Zimbabwe.

Ground was to be broken April 6, and the first students are scheduled to enroll in the first two colleges (theology and agriculture) in 1992.

The 1988 General Conference, top legislative body of the church, approved the university and two funding goals for the 1989-92 quadrennium.

A $10 million goal for construction and operating expenses has being apportioned to the denomination's more than 37,000 congregations in the United States and Puerto Rico. Congregations in Europe, Africa and the Philippines are contributing through special gift categories.

A second $10 million is being sought to endow a permanent scholarship fund.

The major gifts campaign is part of the effort, which has already received more than $1.5 million through annual conference and individual giving, according to Ann Pfisterer, director of the campaign office in Nashville, Tenn.

Figured on enrollment of 500, cost per student—including tuition, room, board, books, fees and health insurance—is projected at about $5,200.

Riverboat gamblers, UMs lock horns on both banks

BY LYN HANSON
Religious News Service

STOCKTON, Ill.—United Methodists in northwest Illinois are mounting a campaign to keep riverboat gambling out of their area.

Bishop Duecker

Over 100 opponents of Mississippi River gambling gathered recently at Stockton's Calvary United Methodist Church. They heard Bishop R. Sheldon Duecker of Chicago say, "I am here to support the pastors and lay persons who are concerned about the quality of life in this county and community.

"Society needs to take a stand against gambling as a general practice. Society has tended to place limits on the choices people have, and we believe limits on gambling will contribute to the quality of life."

Last year Illinois passed a riverboat gambling law, following Iowa, which opened legal channels for riverboats two years ago.

Floating casinos a reality

Only now, however, is the return of the floating casinos coming close to reality.

Three riverboats are on the verge of operating out of home ports in Iowa. And in Illinois the Jo Daviess Riverboat Corp. has been granted a state license for a gambling boat to be docked on the Mississippi near East Dubuque.

Jo Daviess has asked the county board for $3.5 million in revenue bonds to underwrite improvements at the docking area.

Bishop Duecker, joined by the audience at Calvary church, prayed that the politicians in charge of making the decisions on gambling will make wise choices.

The Rev. C. William Landis of Savanna, which is also a potential docking site for riverboat gambling, said United Methodists oppose reliance on gambling for economic development.

"Gambling is not the right path to go," he said. "Our county and community are in desperate need of economic growth, but there are alternatives."

Bishop Duecker said he has been in touch with United Methodist Bishop Reuben Job of Iowa, which is directly across the Mississippi River from the targeted Illinois gambling sites. Bishop Job, he said, has issued a statement opposing gambling.

Concern for quality of life

Opposition to gambling among northwest Illinois United Methodists, Bishop Duecker said, comes from concerns about quality of life and not from any desire of Methodists to force their beliefs on others.

"They (opponents of gambling) are not some kind of rabid people off on some fringe movement," said Bishop Duecker.

"They are illustrative of our democratic system, which calls for citizens to be informed and involved."

Bishop Duecker said local Methodist pastors and church members—and not the bishop—will have to lead the fight against gambling in northwest Illinois. But he has offered his support and resources.

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THE FRED FINCH YOUTH CENTER

Formerly the Fred Finch Orphanage, later the Fred Finch Children's Home, located in Oakland, CA, will celebrate its 100th anniversary in the centennial year, 1991.

All former residents are urged to write or call the Home to receive information and invitations for the gala homecoming to be held May 18, 1991 at Fred Finch campus.

The Centennial Alumni Committee, The Fred Finch Youth Center, 3800 Coolidge Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602, (415) 482-2244.

Faith connections

THEME MAY BE RETAINED: A committee of the church's General Council on Ministries plans to recommend retaining the current United Methodist churchwide theme, "Celebrate and Witness: Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ" for four more years (1993-96). Chairwoman Beverly Abbott of Winthrop, Maine, said recently that the group's decision to recommend continuing the current theme was based in part on results of a churchwide survey which favored retaining the theme. Ms. Abbott said the task force also is concerned with establishing a sense of continuity in the life of the church around a theme that has been popular and characteristic of the life of The United Methodist Church.

PENSIONS AWARD: E. Ward Emery of Parsippany, N.J., received the 1991 Charles L. Calkins Award for his 23 years' work in pensions programs of the Northern New Jersey Annual Conference. "Few people have given as much of themselves to the cause of United Methodist pensions in such a dedicated fashion and with such good Christian spirit," said the Rev. James F. Parker, Pensions chief executive. The Calkins award is named for a former general secretary of the pensions board.

ESSAY COLLECTION: A second collection of essays by United Methodist Bishop Woodie W. White (Illinois Area), titled "Conversations of the Heart," has been released by Abingdon Press, an imprint of The United Methodist Publishing House. Most of the essays, like those in his first volume, "Confessions of a Prairie Pilgrim," were published initially as signed columns in the Central Illinois conference edition of The United Methodist Reporter.

Woodie White

HELPLINE HEAD: Alan J. Kemery has been named executive director of Contact U.S.A., a national office for a Christian-based network of 77 crisis intervention and helpline centers across the country. Contact U.S.A. was organized 24 years ago under sponsorship of The Methodist Church's General Board of Evangelism.

HOLINESS GATHERING: The Christian Holiness Association will hold its 123rd convention April 16-19 in Columbus, Ohio. "Our Wesleyan Heritage" is the theme as the association commemorates the bicentennial of John Wesley's death. The association consists of 15 denominations, approximately 50 colleges and universities and regional associations throughout the U.S., Canada and other countries.

Starvation stalking 21 million people

Relief workers say human choices endanger populations in Horn of Africa

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

Twenty-one million people—equal to the combined population of America's nine largest cities—face starvation in the Horn of Africa.

That's 21 times more than died in the Ethiopian famine in 1984, according to Katherine Smith of Bread for the World.

Ms. Smith said so many people are at risk in that part of Africa because of complications related to the Persian Gulf war and because of continuing civil wars in Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. Bread for the World is a Christian citizens' movement which lobbies the U.S. Congress on legislation affecting poor and hungry people.

The greatest number of people facing hunger and illness are in Sudan, said Ms. Smith and Hershey Leaman, food aid coordinator of the Mennonite Central Committee.

An example of the kinds of difficulty faced by aid groups was noted by Ms. Smith, who said, "Presently, in the port of Bor in Southern Sudan, a lifesaving barge called the 'Red Cross Two' sits filled with food and medical supplies.

"To reach a half a million civilians struck by drought and disease the barge must pass through areas in the south held by rebels in Sudan's bloody civil war.

"The government of Sudan, located in the northern capital city Khartoum, fears the barge will be captured by rebel soldiers and used to transport weapons."

Thus, the government "will not allow the Red Cross Two to proceed with relief efforts in opposition-held areas," Ms. Smith said.

Yet another complication is a strong anti-Western, and decidedly anti-American, sentiment in the Horn of Africa.

However, Mr. Leaman said that "the situation in the Horn is so desperate that we feel it is irresponsible to delay food assistance."

Both organizations are trying to find ways to help African people.

The Mennonite committee joined five other organizations to send a 20,000-ton food gift to Sudan by ship. The other agencies are CARE, World Vision Canada, Cross-Border Coalition, United Church of Canada and Canadian Baptist Federation.

Bread for the World supports and is asking church congregations in the United States to support legislation before Congress: The Horn of Africa Recovery Act.

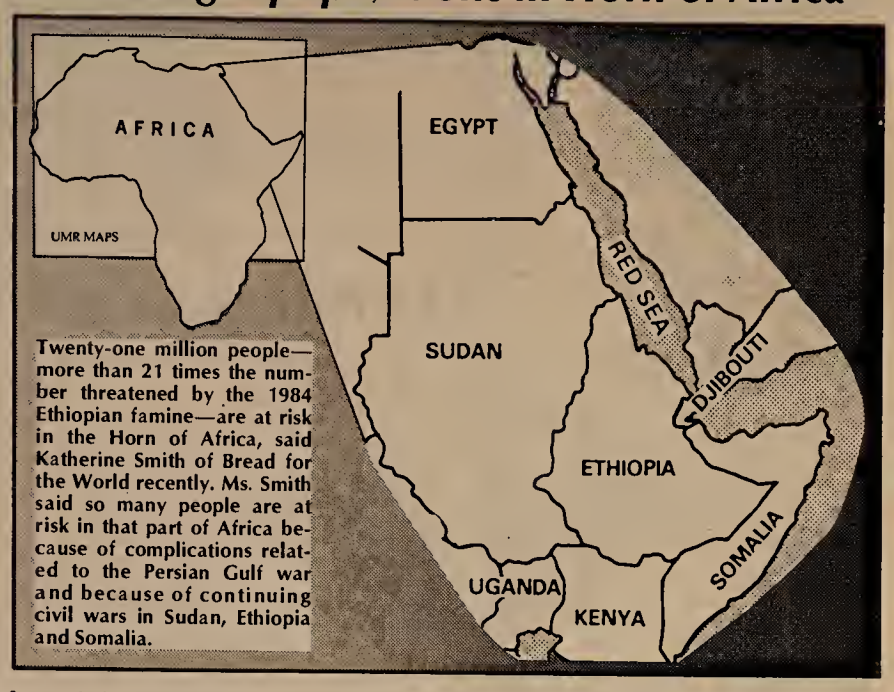
The legislation asks the United States to do three things:

- Provide immediate food aid to people in all areas of the Horn (rather than sending money or food to the governments where it frequently has been diverted or distributed selectively);
- Support and increase aid to local grassroots organizations and projects, and
- Seek peaceful solutions to conflicts in the three nations.

Bread for the World is asking churches to set aside a time during worship services to take "an offering of letters" to senators and representatives.

The organization urges that the letters be written, dropped into the offering plate and then sent by the church to local members of Congress asking them to cosponsor and support the Horn of Africa Recovery Act.

An "offering of letters" kit is available for a nominal fee from Katherine Smith, 802 Rhode Island Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20018.



Twenty-one million people—more than 21 times the number threatened by the 1984 Ethiopian famine—are at risk in the Horn of Africa, said Katherine Smith of Bread for the World recently. Ms. Smith said so many people are at risk in that part of Africa because of complications related to the Persian Gulf war and because of continuing civil wars in Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia.

Needs are great in Liberia following civil war

United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—The United Methodist Church in Liberia has a laundry list of needs as it attempts to recover from that country's devastating civil war.

Those needs include vegetable seeds, agricultural tools, school supplies, medical and hospital supplies, construction tools and materials and well-digging supplies.

According to Lloyd Rollins—a United Methodist Committee on Relief executive who recently visited Liberia—restoring the country to normalcy "is going to be a long, laborious process."

To date, UMCOR has received $237,331 for Liberian relief through the Bishops' Emergency Appeal (Advance No. 150300-7) and has committed about $200,000, Mr. Rollins said.

Most recently, two shipments of vegetable seeds have been sent to United Methodist Bishop Arthur Kulah of Monrovia, Liberia, for the planting season.

Mr. Rollins also is working on selected shipments of needed items through some annual conferences.

Ruth Erhardt, a Lutheran nurse who served on a Church World Service medical team there from December to early March, reported spotty electrical power, a continuing lack of drinkable water, and a shortage of adequate housing.

Food is more available now, she added, but very expensive and many people have little cash income.

Besides being displaced from their homes, "there are still many families who are separated," she said.

Liberians are participating in every part of the recovery process. At Cooper Clinic in Monrovia, they served as staff with Ms. Erhardt and Kim David, a United Methodist medical doctor from Copenhagen.

At the United Methodist-related Ganta Hospital, they remained after missionaries had been evacuated. Control of the hospital has not yet been returned to the United Methodist Church.

The Rev. Robert Fletcher, an executive of the mission board's World Division, is being kept current with the situation at Ganta Hospital by Loretta Gruver. She is a United Methodist nurse who is working there with Medecins Sans Frontiers, a Belgian medical organization.

He has learned that the hospital workers remain, despite the fact that they are being paid only in food—one meal per day and a half bag of rice per month.

Ms. Gruver also reported a good working relationship with the Belgian organization, just one example of the ecumenical effort being made in Liberia.

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U.S.-born churches struggle to find kinship

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

IRVING, Texas—In any traditional Christian "family portrait," who among American-born churches are generally left out?

What family traits do these relatively new churches share with churches such as United Methodism from older, more traditional backgrounds?

How might an understanding of these common "family traits" promote Christian unity by making it possible, for example, to write a more truly ecumenical version of church history?

These and similar questions were the focus of a recent two-day consultation on "American-born churches." The March 13-14 consultation was sponsored by the Study Group on History, a unit of the Faith and Order Working Group of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A.

Concluding 10-year effort

Professor Donald Dayton of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Ill., told the meeting's 28 participants that the consultation was the last stage of a 10-year effort by the NCC to make a "distinctive" North American contribution to a World Council of Churches group grappling with the concept of "apostolic faith."

Dr. Dayton said that many "new" North American churches—those such as the Holiness, Pentecostal, Adventist, and Restoration churches (Churches of Christ, Independent Christians and Disciples of Christ) that were born in the 19th century on U.S. soil—conceive of their "apostolicity" in "non-traditional ways." With some exceptions, he noted, these churches have had little if any contact with the wider ecumenical movement.

("Apostolicity" was used throughout the meeting to refer to elements of the Christian faith thought to reflect the beliefs and practices of Jesus' "apostles" that is, the "core" of the faith.)

Dr. Dayton pointed out that descendants of the ancient church—primarily Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican—tend to view apostolicity in "ecclesiological terms." Descendants of Reformation churches, stemming from the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s, view it in terms of "doctrinal and theological continuity."

By contrast, he said, American-born churches have "worked along different axes, finding ethical, experiential, behavioral and other lines of continuity with the Apostolic age."

Scholars representing five American-born church movements—the four named above plus African-American churches—presented papers that generally supported Dr. Dayton's observations.

Holiness history detailed

For example, Dr. Paul Bassett of Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., presented a detailed history of the Holiness movement.

Dr. Bassett said the movement was born as a reaction to 19th century Methodism by supporters of abolition and those who wanted to place primary emphasis on John Wesley's doctrine of perfection and "entire sanctification."

According to Dr. Bassett, the primary vehicle for apostolicity among Holiness churches—including Free Methodists, Wesleyan Methodists, and Church of the Nazarene—has been "religious experience guided by corporate worship."

In a concluding response to Dr. Bassett and others, the Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky of the Orthodox Church in America, and president of the NCC, said that "virtually everything I've heard I'm able to find in the Orthodox Church."

"At the very core is the faith of the apostles, particularly as confessed by Peter in Matthew 16," Dr. Kishkovsky said.

Plans call for papers presented at the Amerian-born churches consultation to be collected in a book coedited by Dr. Dayton and Professor Frederick Norris of Emmanuel School of Religion in Johnson City, Tenn.

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Methodist churches eye merger

United Methodist News Service

ST. SIMONS ISLAND, Ga.—Representatives of four Methodist denominations took steps recently to strengthen their common ties of heritage by authorizing a joint commission to study possible union.

More than 30 bishops representing The United Methodist Church and three predominantly black denominations—the African Methodist Episcopal (AME), African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) churches—approved a resolution requesting each body of bishops to "petition their respective General Conferences to authorize a study commission for the purpose of exploring possible merger."

The commission, to be composed of five representatives from each denomination, would be mandated to make regular progress reports to each denomination's body of bishops and to prepare a proposal for a study commission "for each General Conference no later than 1996."

The resolution will be reviewed by each denomination's bishops before referral to the top assemblies.

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For further information please contact
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Clergy husbands blaze new trail

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

Spouses of United Methodist clergywomen have not heard much about what ministers' husbands should do, say some Georgia men who should know.

Although the denomination began ordaining women in the 1950s, large numbers did not enter the ministry until twenty years later. And fitting men into traditionally female organizations has not been easy.

He attended luncheon

Spencer Garrard, a teacher, is among a few men who attend the South Georgia clergy spouses' luncheon, although the annual retreat is still limited to clergy wives.

His wife is the Rev. Cynthia Cox Garrard, associate pastor of St. Luke United Methodist Church, Columbus, Ga.

Emory Daniel, an Atlanta attorney, said members have been kind and helpful, although at first, "they weren't quite sure ... how to deal with me."

When his wife, the Rev. Sally Daniel, went to Grant Park-Aldersgate United Methodist Church in 1978, some members had apparently expected clergy wives "to come in and be sort of an unpaid staff member." That role, he said, has changed.

"I don't think it is appropriate for the spouse of the preacher to be chairperson of the finance committee or the administrative board ... or involved in salary-setting," he said.

"All those things I used to do. It's hard for a fellow who's said what he thought all along" to refrain from doing so.

Mr. Daniel's wife entered the ministry after several years of marriage, and he supported her decision.

However, Mr. Daniel said, knowing "what sort of commitment it involved and, being a human, selfish fellow, I was not enthusiastic.

'Learned to live with it'

"But I've learned to live with it," he said. Because he sees his wife fulfilled, he appreciates that.

Mr. Garrard, on the other hand, entered directly into the clergy spouse role with his marriage.

"I was fully cognizant of all the possibilities involved in ministry and agreed to them," he said.

While Mr. Garrard said he is committed to move with his wife if she is assigned to a new church, he hopes it will not be necessary.

Mr. Daniel said "where she moved would make all the difference in the world. I have an established law practice ... and cannot and will not leave it."

The men agreed that their own professional roles help keep them from being intimidated by their wives' clergy role.

Both men agreed that they are proud of their wives' ministry and have been welcomed graciously by the congregations their wives serve.

Both are active church leaders, sometimes serving as Sunday school teachers.

They also agree that they feel comfortable in their role and take it seriously, although a sense of humor can alleviate the difficult situations.

Mr. Garrard remembers the first time he attended the clergy spouses' luncheon in the South Georgia Annual Conference.

"I was told I didn't have any business there," he recalled good-naturedly. But his "bodyguards—my mother-in-law, who is a minister's wife ... and other friends—let the person know I had every right to be there."

This article was adapted from one by Alice M. Smith, director of the news service of the Georgia United Methodist Communications Council, Atlanta.

Review

TNT's 'Chernobyl: The Final Warning' weaves a 'well-told tale of human sin'

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

The latest made-for-television movie by TNT cable service, "Chernobyl: The Final Warning," presents the story of the Soviet nuclear power plant disaster as a sort of modern moral fable in which the first sin is pride.

In keeping with Ted Turner's ecological activism and opposition to smoking, there also are subtle comments about the evils of tobacco and the ethics of preserving the environment.

Workers ignore signs

In the early morning hours of April 26, 1986, a routine test at an electricity-generating station in the Ukraine goes wrong.

Hubris, in the form of over-confidence, causes plant workers to ignore the first signs of danger and then to override the automatic shut-off system.

Pride also causes both local officials and the government to avoid facing the seriousness of the situation, thinking they can avoid telling anyone what has happened.

Their smugness and failure to communicate openly hampers their response to the accident and delays evacuation of the area.

When an American leukemia specialist arrives to help deal with radiation sickness, the Soviets at first are unwilling to admit that they need outside assistance.

"Chernobyl: The Final Warning" makes this tale all the more dramatic by focusing on two local firefighters who suffer severe radiation burns at Chernobyl and the doctor who comes from Los Angeles to try to save their lives through bone-marrow transplants.

Many patients die

Dr. Robert Gale, played by Jon Voight, is skilled, courageous and dedicated, yet even he falls victim to our human tendency to over-estimate our abilities: despite his best efforts, his patients die at a ferocious rate.

Dr. Gale comes away chastened from the Chernobyl meltdown, convinced that this was humanity's "final warning" that no nation could hope to deal effectively with a major nuclear accident or the most limited use of nuclear weapons.

The reactor core, we are told, will remain dangerous for seven billion years; 40,000 people may eventually die due to the disaster; land within 30 miles of the plant may remain uninhabitable for 10,000 years—twice as long as the pyramids have stood.

Dr. Gale achieves few cures through medical technology, but he reassures Elena, the fearful wife of a firefighter, that those who have encouraged her to have an abortion have greatly exaggerated the chances that her baby may be deformed.

Dr. Gale also helps persuade Mikhail Gorbachev to be open with his people—and with the whole world—about the catastrophe.

PHOTO BY DANNY FELO

"Chernobyl: The Final Warning" looks at the worst nuclear accident in history and the people who were caught up in it. Jon Voight stars as Dr. Robert Gale, the bone marrow specialist who led the international medical team that converged on Moscow to help treat the survivors.

At a time when the Soviet leader appears to be increasingly stifling dissent within his country, we can only hope that he has not entirely forgotten the lessons of Chernobyl.

Two talented Oscar-winners, Jon Voight and Jason Robards (who plays Armand Hammer, the industrialist who gets Dr. Gale into the Soviet Union), turn in solid performances. British actress Sammi Davis is very affecting as Elena, as are Annette Crosbie and Ian McDiarmid as Soviet doctors.

"Chernobyl: The Final Warning" airs at 8 p.m. EST April 22 and repeats throughout the week. It is a well-told tale of human sin and our need for a little humility about our technological prowess.

Dear Deborah

Reader cries 'help' when coworker dies of AIDS

Dear Deborah:

There was a young man in our office whom everybody liked. Recently he died of AIDS.

We wanted to send flowers or go to the funeral, but our boss said that he did not want the company name involved in any way.

He didn't want it known that we had someone with AIDS working in our midst.

We got around it by sending flowers just in our first names, and some of us did go to the visitation since we could not get off work for the funeral.

But now it seems like our office is a dead place and I dread going to work each morning. Several of us are looking for new jobs, but they are hard to find these days.

I can't afford not to have a job so I drag myself in day after day.

There must be some way to change this. HELP!

Tina

Dear Tina:

It sounds as if you are a group of people who are not allowed to grieve for your lost co-worker. I strongly urge you to find a grief support group or at least a counselor you can talk with.

Grief usually heals eventually when it is out in the open, but when it is denied, depression is often the result. The fact that he had AIDS, and the attitude of your boss, are corollary factors to your grief, and most people would be angry about them.

But until you can allow yourself to grieve and get angry, you are likely to continue to feel as you describe yourself in your letter.

If you have a pastor you can talk with, by all means do so. Pastors are able to keep confidential the concerns of others and would be able to help you understand that it is all right for Christians to grieve.

But, as the Bible says, we do not grieve like people who have no hope. And the pastor might also be able to help you face your anger, again as a Christian. After all, even Jesus got angry in the right circumstances.

My guess is you may already be on the right track, since you did write this letter. God is with you.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

'Sweetest name' can be sung to many tunes

There is a name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in mine ear,
The sweetest name on earth.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

The hymn was written in 1855 by a student in Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

Frederick Whitfield, born in the village of Threapwood in Shropshire, was graduated from Trinity College in 1859.

He felt deeply the call to the ministry and was ordained in the Church of England. He was appointed to parishes in Yorkshire and later served at Greenwich, near London.

In less than ten years, Whitfield's hymn appeared in hymnals and songbooks published in America.

Cast in four-line stanzas, the hymn was in the metrical form of Common Meter—first and third lines with eight syllables, and the second and fourth with six.

Many hymns in the mid-19th century were in this old ballad form and could be sung to any of the Common Meter hymn tunes. This was practical since most collections of hymns printed only the words.

Churches on the Western frontier, and also in rural areas in the eastern states, usually had only one copy of the hymnal. The preacher or a "singing deacon" would give out the tune and "line out" the hymn text line by line as the congregation sang it.

The tune we use for Whitfield's hymn is of unknown origin. It has a refrain that is repeated after each stanza. The refrain text is not a part of Whitfield's original hymn but was added by an anonymous person.

Because of its simplicity and lilting style, the tune is typical of the folklike camp meeting songs that emerged in America in the early 19th century.

It has appeared in hymnals with other Common Meter hymns, such as John Newton's "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound" and Isaac Watts's "Alas, and did my Savior bleed."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"O For a Heart to Praise My God"

Review

Bill Moyers looks at the power of family myths

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Bill Moyers

Some people of faith were offended by Baptist preacher-turned-journalist Bill Moyers' interviews on public television with Joseph Campbell about the power of myth—particularly when Dr. Campbell talked about "Christian myths."

When mythologists call something a myth, however, they do not mean that it is false. Quite the contrary, they mean that it is a powerful story that may contain profound truth about who we are and what we are called to be.

Sam Keen's spiritual pilgrimage has led him from Harvard Divinity School and the editorship of "Psychology Today" to working with countless people in seminars which explore the myths which illuminate—or distort—their lives.

"Moyers/Your Mythic Journey with Sam Keen," which will be broadcast at 10 p.m. EST April 15 on the Public Broadcasting Service (check local listings), is a probing look at the myths which shape us.

Dr. Keen contends that "every family has a mythology in which it assigns people in that family certain roles."

In dysfunctional families, he observes, one child is designated the "rebellious son" or the "bad daughter" and prisons are filled with those who "have, quite faithfully, lived out those scripts that their family has given them."

Mr. Moyers and Dr. Keen engage in some wonderful reminiscing about how they grew up in Texas and Tennessee, sharing both the positive and negative aspects of the roles their families assigned them.

Only by becoming aware of our "scripts" and telling our own stories, Dr. Keen contends, can we make sense out of our lives and take responsibility for our own journeys.

"The myths that bind us most," he says, "are the ones we don't recognize."

From children's sermons to "narrative preaching," story-telling is making a come-back in the church today, a development Mr. Moyers and Dr. Keen might appreciate.

"By telling stories," Mr. Moyers says, "we remember our past, invent our present and envision our future."

Mr. Moyers' conversation with Dr. Keen and the latter's seminar-teaching cover a wide rage of topics, from what it means to be a man to the symbolic meaning of what we carry in our wallets.

Christians should find themselves agreeing with—and thinking further about—what the two of them have to say.

Dr. Keen asks us, for example, to question the materialistic values we take for granted.

"The most frequent problem I find," he says, "is that people are successful and it's killing them."

Our credit cards represent an ethic of "Buy it now! Have no unfulfilled desires!"

We ask young people, "How will you make a living?" when we should first ask, "What are your gifts? What can you contribute to the world?"

"Moyers/Your Mythic Journey with Sam Keen" is a television program that people of faith should applaud—and watch.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

Scholar criticizes record of South African churches

By HENNIE SERFONTEIN
Religious News Service

CAPE TOWN, South Africa—Despite their anti-apartheid rhetoric, South Africa's English-language churches have been as guilty as the Afrikaans Dutch Reformed churches of upholding apartheid, according to Charles Villa Vicencio, professor of religious studies at the University of Cape Town.

Mr. Villa Vicencio, a Methodist, is one of the leading authorities on the church-state conflict in South Africa.

He is also the author of the book, "Trapped in Apartheid," which deals with the role of the English-language churches over the years.

In an interview, the scholar said that these churches need as much as the Dutch Reformed Church to confess publicly about their past role in apartheid.

He said that the English churches' condemnation of apartheid on the grounds of principle and theology has given a false impression of their real position and role.

"Determined to maintain some semblance of unity between their black and white members, the English-speaking churches have often been obliged, the cynic might suggest, to adopt a position equidistant between right and wrong," he said.

"Mostly there has been a yawning gap between our words and our deeds," he added.

Looking back over the past 40 years, Mr. Villa Vicencio said that in the late '40s and early '50s these churches "responded with embarrassing ambivalence" to notorious apartheid laws such as the Mixed Marriages and Bantu Education Acts.

He said that "synod, general assembly and conference resolutions fill the record books of what have been called the anti-apartheid churches, but these same churches opposed the decision" of the World Council of Churches to provide humanitarian aid to liberation movements that are now legal in South Africa.

Mr. Villa Vicencio said these churches ignored the fact that many of the blacks who were crossing the border into exile and joining the then-outlawed African National Congress and Pan African Congress were their own members.

At the same time, he said, these English-speaking churches continued to send chaplains to the South African Defense Force.

In so doing, the scholar said, "these churches were in practice supporting the status quo as opposed to the creation of a new South Africa as propagated by the liberation movements."

In the '80s, he said, these churches "were bitterly divided on the issue of economic sanctions," and ultimately very few supported sanctions wholeheartedly, "despite the fact that the majority of the members were black and supporting the call for sanctions."

Poem of the Week

DAY OF GLORY

Let me, Lord, attend your
Resurrection,
see you as you stir a wisp of vine,
as you rise in glory and in
splendor,
promising you'll be attending
mine.

—CLAIRE PUNEKY

Black woman's experiences described

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—A new Abingdon Press release describes a black woman's experiences of racial and sexual prejudice in the corporate world.

"Accept No Limitations" by Marjorie L. Kimbrough also outlines conflicts of family and religious life with her 28-year career in data processing.

Ms. Kimbrough is an instructor in religion and philosophy at United Methodist-related Clark Atlanta University.

Her husband is the Rev. Walter Kimbrough, pastor at Ben Hill United Methodist Church in Atlanta.

THE UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF LOUISIANA

527 North Boulevard • Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720 • (504) 346-1646 • Fax (504) 383-2652

I want to affirm the work of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana and its important place in the life of the church at every level.

Through the Foundation, persons can provide a witness for Christ and the church in a variety of ways for centuries to come. They can:

1. Continue their local church pledge.
2. Give money to their local church for lectureships, building upkeep and capital improvements.
3. Provide funds for a missional cause.
4. Undergird our Conference institutions.
5. Memorialize and honor a loved one.

If you are interested in knowing more about the Foundation, do not hesitate to ask your pastor, contact Dr. Kenneth Reed, or visit with me.

The Foundation is a vital ministry of the Louisiana United Methodist Church.

William B. Oden

FOUNDATION SUNDAY, APRIL 21

With the approval of the Conference Council on Ministries and Conference Council on Finance and Administration, Sunday, April 21 has been set aside as "Foundation Awareness Sunday" in every church in Louisiana Methodism. The Foundation office has provided leaflets for inclusion in church bulletins on that Sunday. A clip-out section is printed on the leaflet for the purpose of requesting information on planned giving. We look forward to receiving your request for information on how you can plan a lasting gift to your church or favorite institution. The Foundation exists, as do the other ministries of the conference, to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; and to help people understand how to be better stewards of the money entrusted to them by God.

Foundation Assists Cornerstone

The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana has recently played a significant role in the revitalization of Cornerstone United Methodist Church in New Orleans. Even before his appointment in June as Senior Minister, Thomas L. Howe, Jr. contacted the Foundation to ask Dr. Kenneth R. Reed's help in strengthening the financial health of the church. As a result, Dr. Reed met with church leaders as a consultant in planning the fall financial drive. Rev. Howe said, "Ken did not tell us what to do, but helped us find a way to do it. The drive was so successful that we pledged our original budget. In the history of this church, it was by far the most successful pledge campaign they have had."

In another effort to assist Cornerstone, the Foundation made a one-time appropriation grant to Cornerstone in January. As a result, the church was able to assign Dr. Robert Harrington as a key associate in this multi-ethnic congregation. "Dr. Harrington is making a very significant impact in the growth of this vibrant congregation," commented Dr. Reed. The Foundation has also committed a $10,000 loan to Cornerstone as it continues to recover the role envisioned for it when it was established. "This is a rapidly growing congregation, we have taken in 60 members since October. We are a fast-growing church, God's spirit is working at Cornerstone," stated Rev. Howe.

The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana exists to be the Development arm of every church and institution in Louisiana. We would like to help. Give us a call.

Rev. Thomas L. Howe, Jr., Dr. Kenneth R. Reed and Dr. Robert Harrington at a recent meeting at Cornerstone United Methodist Church in New Orleans.

Gifts That Give Back The Charitable Gift Annuity

Tax reform has eliminated numerous loopholes that existed in the income tax arena. One that has remained is the Charitable Gift Annuity.

Briefly, the charitable gift annuity is an agreement in which you make a gift to a charitable institution and receive a guaranteed life income for yourself and/or others. In the process, you can deduct a portion of the charitable contribution and obtain some tax-free income.

Funding the Annuity

The charitable gift annuity is funded by giving cash, securities or other property to the charity. The use of appreciated property will allow you to reduce income tax for a portion of the appreciation on the property used to fund the annuity.

Deductibility and Income

The gift is partially deductible on your income tax return in the year of the contribution since the taxpayer is making a transfer of "future interest" to the charity. The initial annuity payments will be tax free until the donor has recovered his investment. Thereafter, the annuity will be reportable as ordinary income for personal income tax purposes.

Examples of the various aspects of a $10,000 charitable gift annuity are as follows:

Donor Age	Annual Income from Annuity	Charitable Deduction
50	$650	$4,614
55	$670	$4,707
60	700	4,804
65	730	4,992
70	780	5,166
80	960	5,574

Beneficiaries

The designation of beneficiaries allows the donor several alternatives. For example, a married couple could provide for the establishment of an annuity wherein the principal will transfer to the charity on the death of the last spouse. Alternatively, a donor could provide for the transfer of the principal to the charity on the death of surviving children. Any combination of beneficiaries can be utilized to meet the donor's needs. Of course, the longer the deferment of gift to the charity, the smaller the current deduction for the charitable gift.

How does the charity benefit? When you name one or more charities as the final beneficiary of your gift annuity, you have made a future gift. As such the charity will receive the principal and income provided by the investment subsequent to the lifetimes of the designated beneficiaries. In this manner, you are able to perpetuate your commitment to your favorite charity beyond your lifetime.

The creative utilization of charitable donations with effective income tax planning is beginning to emerge as a significant alternative available to taxpayers. If you would like further information as to this or other such examples, please notify us.

Kenneth R. Reed

The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana exists for the purpose of serving churches, agencies, institutions and members of the conference. We are YOUR staff — YOUR development team. Since my appointment to the position of Executive Director in June, I have traveled over 25,000 miles to let you know that we are in business to help you extend your ministry.

We work for you in primarily three areas:

1. Workshops, Seminars And Consultations

The foundation is planning several types of seminars which will help churches and members with finances and planned giving. These include seminars on Wills, Money Management, Investing, and Establishing a Permanent Endowment. We would be happy to schedule one in your church. I am also available to help in annual fund raising drives.

2. Management And Investment Funds

The Foundation now handles more than $11,000,000 in funds owned by local churches, institutions, and individual trusts from all over the state. Through the use of professional managers and a skilled investment committee, the Foundation is in a position to accept deposits on both a short and long term basis and to realize an attractive return on these investments.

3. Gifts For Charitable Purposes

Charitable gifts made through the Foundation earn income which is used in the manner designated by the donor. The Foundation will work with donors in the establishment of annuities, charitable trusts and other vehicles to serve the desires of the donor and to benefit the designated cause.

Let us know how the Foundation can help you. Together we can make it possible for people to dedicate significant resources that will further the cause of God's work in our Annual conference and around the world.

Kenneth R. Reed

Why Deposit With the Foundation?

One of the primary functions of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana is to serve as a depository for funds from churches and agencies of the Louisiana Annual Conference. These funds are conservatively invested through the leadership and policies established by an experienced Investment Committee and an Investment Management Agreement with the Trust Department at Premier Bank in Baton Rouge. The benefits of depositing funds with the Foundation include:

1. Excellent Earnings

Funds deposited with the Foundation will be invested with special attention to safety and maximization of earnings. Because of the large amount of money invested, returns are better than those that can be obtained with small investments. In addition to better earnings, all funds invested are FDIC insured

2. Accessibility Of Funds

Because of the liquidity of the Foundation's funds, our investors are able to make withdrawals with very little notice and at no penalty or loss of interest.

3. Continuity Of Management

The Investment Committee of the Foundation Board and the staff at Premier Bank's Trust Department, along with our Foundation Counsel provide continuity in management of funds, with frequent review to assure you the best return.

4. Free Services Are Provided

The Foundation provides other services to churches and agencies of the Conference. These include consulting on establishment of Permanent Endowment Funds, conducting Wills and Planned Giving Seminars, and working with local churches on annual fund raising campaigns.

5. Encouragement To Others

As your church or agency makes a deposit with the Foundation, you influence others in our connection relationship to do likewise. The participation of each church or agency increases the total strength of the Foundation and enables it to be of greater service to the Conference.

Methodist Home of New Orleans and United Methodist Foundation Sign Management Agreement: Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director, United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana and Dr. Richard Hodges, Executive Director, Methodist Home of New Orleans look over the Investment Management Agreement signed between the two organizations recently.

Director Available for Visit

Dr. Reed, Executive Director of the Foundation is available to come to your church to preach, meet with Sunday School classes, speak at church nights, or visit with individuals who are interested in making a gift to your church or institution. All this at no cost to you. Please call the area offices at 504/346-1646.

Clip and Mail

The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana
Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720
504/346-1646

I am interested in receiving, without obligation, information on:

____ Wills ____ Life Income Plans ____ Giving Securities

____ Giving Real Estate ____ Giving through Life Insurance

____ Gift Annuities ____ Charitable Trusts ____ Revocable Trusts

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: Area Code (____) Number _____

"WHAT'S IN A NAME . . .?"

Should you be inclined to set up a trust with the Foundation or execute your will, your attorney will need our correct, legal name:

The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana

The Foundation's attorney is:

Mr. Phil Preis, Preis & Crawford, P.O. Box 3656, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, 504/343-5290.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

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The Centering Moment

Howard Thurman was one of the spiritual giants of the twentieth century. For many years he was minister of the chapel at Boston University. His quiet meditative sermons made him, according to Life Magazine, one of America's ten greatest preachers. The following words, written as a prayer, have stayed with me since I read them.

We wait in the quietness for some centering moment that will redefine, reshape, and refocus our lives. It does seem to be a luxury to be able to give thought and time to the ups and downs of one's journey while the world around is so sick and weary and desperate. But, our Father, we cannot get through to the great anxieties that surround us until, somehow, a path is found through the little anxieties that beset us.

I think Howard Thurman is on target. It's the "little anxieties" that do us in — those piranha-like problems and frustrations that seem very small but add up to weight us down.

The answer? to "wait in quietness for some centering moment"; which is to say that all our "little anxieties" are put in perspective when we realize that Jesus Christ, the risen Lord, has permeated our darkness and reigns triumphantly forever and ever!

William B. Oden

Taiwanese Students Enrolled in Centenary's English Language Center

Electronic translators are used only as a last resort in Centenary's English Language Center.

Bright-eyed and enthusiastic, five Taiwanese students and their teacher, Dr. Cathy Seymour, would rather discover new words by the traditional methods of show-and-tell or charades, and this most often results in both learning and laughter.

"We resort to the electronic translators in class when nothing else works," smiled Cathy, who has served as friend, driver, tour guide, hostess, and interpreter for the students who have been on campus since October 26.

"They are very intelligent and highly motivated," Cathy said, "and it's fun to be with them because everything is a new experience."

"They come to the United States for one year in an English Language Program," Cathy explained. "As they progress or at the end of the year, they plan to enroll in a college as a regular international student."

Two of Cathy's students are making such rapid progress that they are taking art or music courses at Centenary during the spring semester in addition to their daily English lessons with Cathy.

Dr. Cathy Seymour (standing) teaches English as a second language to Centenary's five students from Taiwan (left to right) Tom Lin, Anny Tzeng, Debby Tu, Maxine Shen, and David Shao.

"We meet five hours a day, Monday through Friday," Cathy said, "and we do a lot of work. We have a text written especially for English as a second language, and we do a lot of oral work. They are leveled," she said, "so some work faster than others." In addition, each student also works with a tutor three to five hours a week.

But some of the best learning may take place outside of the classroom in the dorm or cafeteria or when Centenary students take their new Taiwanese friends off campus to go shopping, to eat yogurt, or to see a movie.

"The Centenary students are very accepting," Cathy said, "and they love to talk with the Taiwanese. They are learning a lot about the cultural differences of their countries."

Members of the Shreveport-Bossier community have also been very supportive of these foreign students. Cathy Chen, a former exchange student, has taken the Taiwanese students to Dallas, to buy "real" rice and other hard-to-get Chinese foods. Others call to take the students to local churches, and on one occasion two Taiwanese students were spotted in a Sunday-evening Church Choir!

Centenary, whose Credo calls for a cosmopolitan student population, also has students from South Africa, England, Mexico, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Canada, and Yugoslavia.

The English Language Program, reopened recently, is open to all nationalities. "It would work with just about any mix," Cathy said. "Other nationalities are definitely welcome."

Persons — Churches — Events

Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital cordially invites the public to view the latest advances in medical technology, including East New Orleans' only litbotriptor, at the Methodist Health Complex on Saturday, April 20 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Methodist Hospital exclusively brings to the East New Orleans community the newest, most advanced and most comfortable technique for eliminating painful kidney stones without surgery, the lithotriptor. The lithotriptor and laser demonstrations will be available at the Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center. Tours of the Metbodist Psychiatric Pavilion will also be available.

* * *

First Street UMC in New Orleans celebrated its 158th anniversary on April 14 during a special 11 a.m. worship service. The theme for the event was "Rejoicing in God's Blessings." In recognition of the celebration, a time capsule sealed for the last twenty-five years was opened during the worship hour and various church artifacts and memorabilia were placed on display. Guest speaker for the event was the Reverend Joe W. McClain, District Superintendent of the New Orleans District. Other highlights from the anniversary were a church-wide banquet which was scheduled on April 2 and a Gospel-Jubilee/Musical Production. The Reverend Abraham E. Davis is pastor.

At a later time, **The Dillard University Male and Female Quartets**, under the direction of Mr. S. Carver Davenport, will appear at First Street. The concert will take place Sunday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m.

* * *

The Reverend Jesse P. McKeithen, retired minister from Grayson, was honored recently during a worship service at **Grayson UMC**, as the unveiling and hanging of a plaque in his honor took place in the sanctuary. Rev. McKeithen is one of the ministers who held membership in the church before becoming an ordained United Methodist minister. The presentation was made by the Reverend Minns S. Robertson, pastor. The plaque was hung by Rev. McKeithen's daughter, Elaine Croft of Monroe. Rev. McKeithen's son, Pierce, and other relatives were present for this special occasion.

April 26-28

First UMC, Baton Rouge to Feature Jubilee Weekend

First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge will sponsor a "Jubilee Weekend — Life After 50" Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 26-28, 1991. The event is specifically designed for those approacbing retirement, already retired, and those wanting to make the most of the rest of their lives. The Biblical imperative comes from Leviticus 25:1-18, where it speaks of the 50tb year as being the Sabbath of Sabbaths and as a time of hallowing and fallowing, of freeing and forgiving and of giving back.

Dr. Franklin Poole, Director of Older Adult Ministries at First Church, has planned the weekend in cooperation witb the Older Adult Council of the church with Dr. Roy Ryan of Nashville, Tennessee and the Reverend Larry Eisenburg of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Ryan and Eisenburg will serve as guest clinicians for the weekend. Mr. Ryan recently retired from the General Board of Discipleship in the area of Older Adult Ministries and Mr. Eisenburg, also retired from the active ministry, is known throughout United Methodism as "Mr. Recreation," Local talent will be used throughout the event.

The weekend will include fun, food, fellowship and classes on the following subjects: Biblical perspectives on aging; Spiritual growth in later years; Making the most of retirement; Nutrition and Microwave cooking; Tai Chi demonstration; Fun and fulfillment in later years; and The Bible and financial planning for retirement. The Sunday worship services will highlight Jubilee and meaning in the Sabbath of your years.

Weekend activities begin Friday at 4 p.m. and conclude Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. Registration is $30 and will include the Friday and Saturday evening meal and the Sunday lunch. Participants are asked to provide their own lunch on Saturday. Registration, which is open to the public, must be received by Monday, April 22. For further information, please contact First Church at (504) 383-4777.

In Memoriam

Esther C. Stapleton, wife of the late Reverend Oliver S. Stapleton, died Marcb 29, 1991. Funeral services were beld Marcb 30 conducted by Dr. George Pearce.

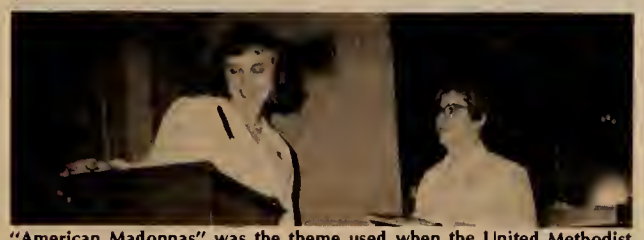
Around the Conference

Fourteen members of the Wakefield Memorial/Grand Chenier UMC's choirs, under the direction of Mrs. Margurite Carter, and accompanied by Mrs. Ada Broussard, participated in the Lake Charles District Conference in February at University UMC in Lake Charles. The choirs sang three pieces at different times during the service and complemented a very well-planned and executed worship-business session conducted by Lake Charles District Superintendent, the Rev. Carole Cotton-Winn. Mrs. Cotton-Winn, left, is shown with the group.

The Most-Reverend Stanley J. Ott, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Baton Rouge Diocese, was the preacher for an ecumenical prayer service held recently in Baton Rouge, during the annual week of Prayer for Christian Unity. First UMC was host of the event that also featured Bishop William B. Oden. The Rev. Chris Andrews is pastor of First Church.

University UMC, Lake Charles, Day School recently celebrated over 30 years of service. An Open House was held and Day School Director Cathy Bresley and her staff were recognized at the morning worship. Shown making plans for the celebration are Floyd Holland, Day School Committee Chairperson, and the Rev. Lael Jones, pastor of University.

The United Methodist Women



"American Madonnas" was the theme used when the United Methodist Women of First UMC, Baton Rouge, gathered for a special get together in the Chapel. The Bihle study group honored Miss Lillian Kennedy upon her retirement as their leader and for her many years of service. Kay Klingler, Unit President, was also honored for her loyal and dedicated service as President of the UMW at First Church. Making the presentation to Kay is Cooky Coffey.

The women of Wesley UMC, Mansfield, observed UMW Sunday during the 9 a.m worship service. Guest speaker for the special occasion was Mrs. Doris Brown, wife of the Rev. Arnold V. Brown, pastor of St. James UMC in Shreveport. The Rev. S. Charles Byrd is pastor of Wesley.

CrossLines special page on page 6.
(Page 5 in local editions)

Recently, several members of David Haas UMC in Bunkie participated in a "Moslem" Study conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Cochran. This picture shows the group enjoying a Muslim meal. The name of the study was "God One — Two Faiths." The study was sponsored by the United Methodist Women.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

'Grand slam' card deal: Little to cheer

"Out at home!"

That's the call on 13-year-old baseball card collector Bryan Wrzesinski of Wheaton, Ill.

Bryan is the focal point of a controversy involving his purchase last spring of a rare baseball card.

Knowledgeable collectors, including Bryan, were aware that the card—a 1968 "Nolan Ryan"—had a book value of nearly $900. So when the youth saw a chance to buy the coveted item for a mere $12, he took it, thus hitting the collector's version of a "grand slam."

But hold the call. It seems that a substitute shop clerk had misread the decimal point in the $1,200 price tag on the baseball card. She quoted the card's price as $12.00.

When the shopowner discovered the error, he demanded that Bryan pay for the card in full or return it.

Backed by his parents, Bryan refused on both scores. Amid a public "rhubarb," the case went to court. A verdict is expected next week.

From a Christian perspective, we see little to cheer and much to lament in this incident.

At its heart is greed, pure and simple.

■ Young Bryan fully realized that he was taking advantage of an unwitting shopkeeper and stood to "score big" on the deal.

■ The shopowner knew that he had asked an excessive price for the card yet used heavy-handed tactics—such as offering a "bounty" for bringing Bryan to see him—to get the card returned.

■ Most disappointing of all, Bryan's parents refused to give their son basic moral guidance, choosing instead to defend a narrow legal interpretation of his "rights."

Ethicist Michael Josepheson succinctly summarized the matter:

"When you move away from the legalisms to ethics, it's a very simple question: What would a person of honor do? The answer is you don't take advantage of another person's mistake."

Regrettably, taking advantage of others' mistakes or looking for ways to get "one up" on others is more widely approved and practiced in our society than we care to acknowledge.

"Greed is good"—an oft-repeated line from the late-1980s movie, "Wall Street"—summarized for many a prevailing mood in which "getting ahead at any cost" has dislodged traditional moral virtues such as fairness, honesty, and compassion.

As Christians, we must bear our share of responsibility for any diminution of such bedrock values.

If greed is blinding people such as Bryan Wrzesinski and his parents to that most basic insight, it's time for Jesus' followers to search our souls about our wider witness to a spiritually and morally confused world.

A good place to start is with a simple question. How consistently do we reinforce in word and deed the fundamental rule of fair play that Jesus taught: "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12)?

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA ASTLE

When young Bryan Wrzesinski saw a chance to buy a coveted baseball card for a mere $12 because of a clerk's error, he took it. Regrettably, taking advantage of others' mistakes is more widely approved and practiced than we care to acknowledge.

FaithLine

According to the above editorial, there's "little to cheer and much to lament" in the baseball card incident involving Bryan Wrzesinski.

If you were Bryan's parent, how would you have advised him as a Christian regarding his purchase of a valuable baseball card at a price that he knew was too low?

Tell us your answer by calling the Reporter's FaithLine answering machine and leaving a 45-second (maximum) recorded message.

Call (214) 630-6499 by midnight April 23.

Letters to the Editor

Gift called 'manna from heaven'

I am somewhat surprised at Joanne Dahlberg's ignorance concerning church camping ministries (see UMR Letters to the Editor, March 22).

Church camping provides a place where people of all ages can discover and rediscover the living Christ, others and themselves.

The camp experience brings the mission field home to the boundaries of the church where children, youth, and adults alike may experience Christ and have an environment where they can respond to Him in a positive way.

The $90 million gift that she refers to is nothing short than manna from heaven and it should be invested for our church's camping ministry, not tied up on another round table of church politics.

Steve Blaze Blazina
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Is self-service all bad?

I present a differing viewpoint from that of Joanne Dahlberg who asked if we United Methodists can, in good conscience, accept the $90 million bequest for the enhancement of our camping programs (see UMR Letters, March 22).

I agree that there are some very urgent, short-term needs that could be addressed, but I believe that the enhancement of our camping programs will result in long-term advantages that will "pay off" well into the next century and beyond.

Many preachers were first inspired to enter the ministry as a result of church camp experiences. I can think of several long-term marriages, that I assume are happy, which began as church camp encounters.

Church camping, under competent Christian leadership, influences many lives, both young and old, for good. So, we serve ourselves. Is that all bad?

Robert C. Bryan
Green Bay, Wisconsin

You omitted key phrases

I think an error was made in choosing what parts of The 1988 Book of Discipline regarding our church's stance on abortion were to be carried in the March 22 issue.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with the current stance or with the Durham Declaration, or holds another view as to what our denomination's position should be on this issue, it seems very key phrases of the current statement were omitted in the excerpt. These include:

■ The United Methodist Church does not affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control and unconditionally rejects it as a means of gender selection.

■ "Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience."

■ "A decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful (emphasis added) consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral (emphasis added) and other appropriate counsel."

I am not writing in support of the present stance or against the Durham Declaration. I am writing as one aware that the only information many United Methodists will have about either position is what they read in the Reporter.

If people are to compare the two, they needed to have the heart of both statements before them. I would assume an excerpt would give me that. In this case it didn't.

Kathy Kruger Noble
Wichita, Kansas

An intriguing question

I am intrigued by the question posed in Denise Johnson Stovall's March 22 article regarding what term should be used by United Methodists when referring to racial ethnic persons in the church?

I suggest that we call them "brother" or "sister." How about "friend?" First names are good. "Mr., Mrs. or Ms." should be acceptable. Would "fellow United Methodist" work?

Aren't United Methodists defeating the purpose of including those of other races and backgrounds into our fellowship when we create a task force to decide what to call them?

Joy Stephenson
Plantersville, Texas

I say move it!

This is in response to the March 22 article headlined, "Task force: It's feasible to move missions board, but should we? Where?"

I say move it! In this day of skyrocketing apportionments, we should do everything we can do to reduce the cost of operating our church so that more funds are available for missional objectives. Moving the General Board of Global Ministries out of New York is a good place to start.

Furthermore, I suggest that the missions board be moved to a section of the country where United Methodism is still growing, i.e., the South or Southwest.

A residual benefit of such a move would be the conservative environment. Maybe it would have a positive impact on the way in which the General Board of Global Ministries uses funds entrusted to it.

Ralph H. Walton, Jr.
Granbury, Texas

Here I Stand

Back Palestinians, no tours to Israel

By JAMES E. LANSDOWNE II

Our nation, with much of the world involved, has just concluded a terribly unwelcomed war to free Kuwait from the tragic and bloody invasion by Iraq. Now we are faced with the larger issue of peace throughout the Middle East.

Although there was no official linkage of Saddam Hussein's rape of Kuwait and the Palestinian issue, there can be little doubt that the Palestinian issue must be addressed and solved by the community of nations at an early date in this post-Gulf War era.

I am not concerned that the bulk of the nations of the world will not press for a solution. But I am concerned about the lack of leadership from the appropriate agencies and the bishops of the United Methodist Church on the issue.

Most everyone except the Palestinians were outraged by the Scud missile attacks on Israel, and rightly so. This outrage has been expressed by leaders from every segment of our society and the U.N. coalition military forces responded with everything at its disposal.

Moral leadership required

Remaining, however, is a long-standing issue of injustice to the Palestinians that cries out for some moral leadership from lay members and clergy of the United Methodist Church.

The church's 1988 "Book of Resolutions" does state that the "current iron-fist policy, which results in violence against Palestinian civilians, is totally unacceptable as civilized behavior."

However, the "new world order" that President Bush has called for demands more than resolutions. The United Nations has had more resolutions addressed to this issue than any other. Now is the time for these statements to gain backing and collective action if there is to be any lasting peace in the Middle East.

My wife and I served for three months last year as interim pastors of a Christian church in a Middle East country. While there, we also traveled in seven of the countries of the area. Before this experience I had felt that with all of the land held by the "Arabs," surely they could set aside a homeland for the Palestinians.

After two weeks in Israel and witnessing the conditions of the Palestinians in the entire region, my blinders were removed. I was shaken out of my misguided complacency.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. James E. Lansdowne II lives in Wichita, Kans., and is a retired member of the Kansas West Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Although I still find it to be nearly impossible to understand how many of the Palestinians have been supportive of Saddam Hussein, I do understand, as one who nearly drowned in a swimming hole as a 10-year-old boy, how a desperate person grasps at anything that seems to offer hope!

Securing boundaries

Through the Gulf War we have learned that the nations of the world can collectively guarantee secure boundaries. What we now must demonstrate is that we can remove festering sores that will make it much easier to maintain boundaries without war.

I have discussed this issue with many of our church leaders, most of whom admit that a moral problem does exist in the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Is there anything concrete that we in the church can do?

I think so.

If the leaders of our church would discontinue sponsoring and leading group travel to Israel until occupied territories are given back to the Palestinians, it would make a meaningful statement.

Human rights violations, whether in South Africa, Latin America or Israel, should find even-handed treatment on the part of the people called United Methodist.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching . . ." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Micah 6:8)

Readings for week of April 22

Monday: Psalms 23
Tuesday: Acts 4:1-7
Wednesday: Acts 4:8-12
Thursday: John 10:1-10
Friday: John 10:11-18
Saturday: 1 John 3:11-17
Sunday: 1 John 3:18-24

What others are saying

"Preachers err by trying to talk people into belief; better they reveal the radiance of their own discovery."
—Joseph Campbell, author (with Bill Moyers), "The Power of Myth"

* * *

"Work can provide an opportunity for spiritual and personal, as well as financial, growth. Good management is largely a matter of love . . . a calling . . . a sacred trust."
—James Autry, Meredith Corp. executive

* * *

"Spiritual wellness is a quality found in strong families which typically manifests itself by attending a church, a mosque or a synagogue."
—Louis W. Sullivan, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services

* * *

"The Scriptures . . . were not written to become source material for historical method. They were written finally to be proclaimed."
—Robert Goeser, professor, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Calif.

My Witness

'Gathering' showed us our Wesleyan heritage

By H. A. "PETER" HARRINGTON

Hard on the heels of the end to the Persian Gulf war, we United Methodists in Louisiana recently experienced a different kind of "line in the sand."

What an extraordinary spiritual experience, to gather on a Saturday with 11,000 brothers and sisters in the faith in Baton Rouge to sing, pray and rejoice in our common heritage as Christians and as United Methodists (see UMR, March 29).

The banners, the processions, the covenants laid upon the altar—all of it literally filled up one's senses to overflowing.

As I reflected a few hours later upon The Gathering experience, I thought I knew what John Wesley saw and felt (although on a grander scale) as the spirit of renewal swept through England and turned that entire nation inside out.

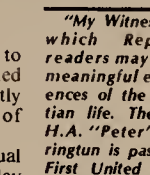
The entire event, which was an outgrowth and local expression of last fall's initiative by our bishops to promote "vital congregations/faithful disciples," was professionally video-taped.

Viewing should be required

Such an event ought to be required viewing for every one of us. Here is the stuff we are made of! Here is the kind of celebration that flowed out of Aldersgate Street in May of 1738.

Here are the very roots of our faith, the rocks from which we've been hewn. Here is the expression of hope, confidence and joy that defined the Wesleyan revival that raced across frontier America.

Right there in Baton Rouge, for an hour and a half, we saw once more who we once were, and who we as United Methodists can be still if we want to be.



"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. H.A. "Peter" Harrington is pastor of First United Methodist Church, Welsh, La. (Louisiana Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Right there, amidst the songs, the banners, the preaching and the fellowship, we drew a line in the sand, clearly differentiating between the apathy and sluggishness of the last 20 years and the promise of the next 20.

Left in the dust of The Gathering, piled up in various corners, was our willingness to "just get along," to do only what minimally needed to be done. Left behind were a 1,000 excuses why we simply couldn't muster the energy to teach, share, preach, sing, cook, guide, give or attend.

Protestations crumpled

Crumpled in the corners were weak protestations that "it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe in something."

Swept up by the custodial crew late Saturday afternoon were countless reasons why we have been more than willing to allow this abundant, life-giving, reconciling energy that has sustained, enriched and strengthened us for generations to languish and fade.

It was so appropriate that we concluded the festivities with a deep and purposeful "celebration of renewal" in each and every United Methodist Church in our conference.

Here, in our own pews from Zwolle to Shreveport to Welsh to Alexandria to Tallulah to Ruston to Oil to Baton Rouge we all quietly drew a personal line in the sand.

There can be a new day for all United Methodists, and not merely for our brothers and sisters in Louisiana. Christ beckons and waits. Hope and grace are ours for the embracing.

Welcome to new readers in Fort Worth

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 350 member-families of **Ridglea United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas** (Central Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Fort Worth, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

MURDER/SUICIDE RULED: Memorial services were held last week in Denver for the Rev. Regina Kobak-Drew and her estranged husband, Martin E. Drew. Police in the Denver suburb of Westminster said Mr. Drew shot Ms. Drew and then himself. Both died April 8 outside Westminster United Methodist Church, where Ms. Drew was associate pastor. Bishop Roy I. Sano (Denver Area) expressed shock and sadness at the "unimaginable tragedy." He said the clergywoman had learned only that day that she had been accepted into a prestigious clinical pastoral education program in New York. Mr. Drew, a former Roman Catholic priest, was a licensed pastor for the United Church of Christ in Henderson, Colo.

STATEMENT MODIFIED: The Rev. James Heidinger, executive director of Good News, an unofficial group within the United Methodist Church, was among 24 evangelical renewal leaders from several denominations who recently modified a section of a declaration they issued a year ago. Some felt that the original document appeared to dismiss some forms of social action as a proper mission of the church. The concluding section of the document urging fidelity to the Bible states, "We deny that the mission of the church is the self-development of exploited peoples or the political liberation of oppressed peoples." The new statement says, "Involvement in social reform may well grow out of the Christian mission and may also serve this mission if it causes people to look beyond human achievements of justice and peace to the spiritual righteousness of the kingdom that God alone gives."

James Heidinger

MONEY MISSING: The "Washington Post" reported recently that the budget director of Arlington (Va.) United Methodist church spent about $650,000 on "unauthorized" items, including chocolates for children and scholarships for young people, from 1982 until his death in December. Church officials reportedly had no inkling that budget director Jim McKinney was taking money out of church coffers until after he died and accountants sifted through records he kept in his tiny, cluttered church office. Mr. McKinney was budget director for the church since 1957, but records could be traced back to only 1982, according to the newspaper.

FREE SPEECH VIOLATED? A parents' group has filed a federal lawsuit against the Philadelphia School District, charging that its efforts to regulate the repertoire of a black gospel choir in a public school violate choir members' free-speech rights. The suit was filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia April 2 on behalf of the Central High School Gospel Choir.

NATIVITY BATTLE: Although the threat of a lawsuit prompted a school board in Parker City, Ind., to move a traditional Nativity scene off public school grounds in December, a citizens' group says it is considering ways to have the display restored this year. The Indiana Civil Liberties Union challenged the Nativity scene on the grounds of Monroe Central Elementary School last year as a violation of the First Amendment.

Compiled from news and staff reports

27 UMC missionaries commissioned

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—Reminded that "God always provides through persons who are sent by God," 27 new United Methodists missionaries were commissioned April 14 by the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

The commissioning service was held during the mission board's spring meeting April 14-18.

The new missionaries include two people formerly with unique churchwide responsibilities.

One is a former elected director of the board who also was executive director of the denomination's National Federation of Asian Americans and more recently superintendent of the Bay View District, California-Nevada Conference.

The Rev. Jonah Chang will be the administrator of the Council on Cooperative Mission, United Church of Japan (Kyodan). His wife, **Mary,** will be involved with family and community ministries among Taiwanese congregations in Japan.

Bette Prestwood, a member of West End UMC in Nashville and former editor of the denominational newsletter, "Newscope," will be a teacher at the Wesley Girls School, Taipei, Taiwan.

Others commissioned:

The Rev. and Mrs. James A. Campbell, Alaska Missionary Conference, assigned to the Willow and Creek UMC, Willow, Alaska.

The Rev. and Mrs. David R. Carefoot, Palm Springs (Fla.) UMC, to pastoral and community ministries, Methodist Church of Argentina.

Duane B. Chase and Karen Elaine Chase, New Hartford UMC in Sauquoit, N.Y., to Zaire—Mr. Chase as a pilot/mechanic, Ms. Chase in family and community ministries.

Mildred Garcia, St. Paul and St. Andrew UMC in New York City, commissioned as a deaconess to continue in Central Records office of the mission board's National Division.

Zella Hammond, First UMC in Redondo Beach, Calif., commissioned as deaconess, special education teacher in Torzance, Calif.

T. Michael and Sharon Boyd Hayes, Christ UMC in Middletown, Ohio, to Maun, Botswana, teachers at Maun Secondary School.

Chris K. Hena, Glenn Memorial UMC in Atlanta. A native of Liberia, she will be an international person in mission in the Soviet Union.

R. Glenn and Roberta H. Huprich, First UMC in Ansonia, Conn., Wesleyan Nursing Homes, Seward, Alaska.

Ethelyn M. Jacoway of Southeast Pierre (South Dakota) UMC, church and community worker in that community.

Karl D. Lehman, Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, teacher in Sierra Leone.

Laura Anne Merrill, University UMC in Austin, Texas, Desert Southwest Annual Conference in Tucson, Ariz.

William C. Mooney and Sylvia O. Mooney of First UMC in Oak Ridge, Tenn., assigned to Vienna, Austria—he as pastor of the United Methodist-English speaking congregation, she in community ministries.

The Rev. Carol Joyce Moore, St. John's UMC, Baltimore, Md., Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina.

The Rev. Chomingwen D. Pond, United Methodist Church of Minocwua, Wis., Nanyam Bible College in Bambur, Nigeria, teacher.

John Mark Rettew, St. Paul's UMC, Lancaster, Pa., church and community worker, Urban Alliance Project, Lancaster.

The Rev. Norvell Dale Robertson and Judith Hale Robertson, Douglas (Alaska) Community United Methodist Church, pastor and church and community ministries at the Douglas Church.

Carol Ann McGowan Stanton, First UMC in Ketchikan, Alaska, teacher in Hong Kong.

Commissioned earlier but recognized during this week's service were:

Loren Keith Stanton, Hong Kong, family and community ministries with his wife, **Carol.**

Jack E. and Flora Manqueira Warner, First UMC in Warsaw, Ind., rural community developers in Yucumo, Beni, Bolivia.

Norma Kehrberg, Harris UMC in Honolulu, Hawaii, and formerly chief executive of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, Kathmandu, Nepal. Ms. Kerhberg had served there as a missionary and returned to that country in February.

Cross-as-anchor gifts bestowed

NEW YORK—For the third year in a row, during a General Board of Global Ministries commissioning service, each new missionary was given a cross in the shape of an anchor.

The Rev. Randolph Nugent, the board's general secretary, told the Reporter that the "specially hued cross will symbolize to each missionary wherever they may be that their anchor is in mission."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Church relief works to overcome big freeze squeeze on California

By B. DENISE HAWKINS
United Methodist News Service

While vivid images of the October 1989 California earthquake linger, the devastation of the December 1990 freeze that hit the state's agriculture industry has evoked little response or aid, according to United Methodist church officials on the scene.

Agriculture and government authorities are estimating damages to the economy, farmers, and equipment at more than $1 billion.

The freeze is ranked as the third worst natural disaster in the state, after the 1906 and 1989 earthquakes.

"People outside this area and those not directly affected do not see the devastation," said the Rev. Jacqueline Meadows, district superintendent in Fresno.

Ms. Meadows is among several United Methodist church leaders coordinating interfaith relief efforts related to the freeze.

She and Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area) will represent the denomination on a newly formed San Joaquin Valley interfaith freeze coalition. The coalition is expected to oversee fund raising and activities of three related interfaith response groups in the valley.

President Bush has declared a state of emergency in 33 counties and is expected to sign an order authorizing emergency housing aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for up to a year.

Freeze swept California

The arctic freeze which swept over California for three days beginning Dec. 20 brought record low temperatures and death to acres of citrus, nut and vegetable crops.

Further, the freeze compounded problems farmers and workers face because of the state's five-year drought.

Freeze effects will likely last two more years, said the Rev. Craig Paterson, disaster relief coordinator for the denomination's California-Nevada Annual Conference.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief responded to the freeze with a $10,000 grant.

Church officials say requests for assistance have overburdened the social services system. Requests are flooding in for rent and utility assistance, medical care for children, job training and placement, transportation, and, most of all, food.

United Methodists are responding to the freeze through a special bishops' appeal, in the California-Nevada area, Advance No. #901115-1.

UNITED METHODIST COMMITTEE ON RELIEF PHOTO BY DONALD L. WEAVER

LINDSAY, Calif.—A citrus grower shows an orange from a crop that suffered from extreme cold last December, following a freeze in the San Joaquin Valley in California. United Methodists in that area are providing emergency relief for farm workers and growers during the crisis, but more funding is needed (see related story).

Clergy credit others as influencing careers

United Methodist News Service

INDIANAPOLIS—While 70 percent of ordained United Methodist ministers who answered a recent survey said the influence of others helped them decide to enter ordained ministry, another 12.4 percent said they're reluctant to encourage others considering the same vocational direction.

These and other findings from a survey on dimensions of pastoral effectiveness were reported during the recent meeting of the denomination's Division of Ordained Ministry.

The research was part of a nationwide effort by the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc. to help churches identify and recruit high-quality clergy.

The Rev. James Oman, director of a project on recruiting United Methodists for ordained ministry, told the group that the findings bear out a theme that arose from Exploration '90, an October 1990 event for young people considering ordained ministry.

"We found that young people have always been interested in the ministry, but no one had ever encouraged them," Mr. Oman said.

Encouraging others has double benefits for ordained ministers, he said.

The research revealed that "a key starting point in renewing the call to ministry is getting back to being more active in encouraging others."

Pastors' reluctance to encourage others, Mr. Oman said, could mean that "the grass-roots nurturing role is no longer functioning effectively."

That role must be "re-invigorated," he said, to develop a model to be used by the church.

The three-year study is sponsored by the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools and funded by Lilly.

Caucus says proposed changes inadequate

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Proposed changes in The United Methodist Church's stance on homosexuality don't go far enough.

So says Affirmation, the unofficial caucus of United Methodists for homosexual and bisexual concerns.

The caucus issued a statement April 6 criticizing proposals under consideration by the committee assigned to study the subject.

"We are dismayed that more than two years of work by the Committee to Study Homosexuality has produced so little progress toward the greater inclusiveness mandated by the Gospel," said the statement issued by Affirmation's national council.

"For a community whose lives have been so consistently trivialized and whose needs are so frequently ignored," the statement continues, "nothing less than an unqualified affirmation and invitation to full participation in all aspects of church life is acceptable."

The caucus' statement criticizes both proposals the study committee is considering to change Paragraph 71F of the United Methodist Social Principles, the denomination's collection of guidelines for faithful Christian witness.

The paragraph, first adopted in 1972, categorizes homosexual practice as "incompatible with Christian teaching."

Both proposals presented to the study committee note a lack of consensus among experts in the Bible, theology, ethics and science regarding homosexuality.

One proposal, favored by a 17-4 majority of the study panelists in an unofficial, nonbinding "straw vote," recommends that because of disagreement among experts on the subject, the church should drop its stance that homosexual practice is incompatible with Christianity.

The other proposal—based on the same disagreement among experts—would retain the church's current stance.

Affirmation's statement contends that the study committee "ignores a clear consensus in the scientific disciplines that same-sex orientation represents a non-pathological variation in the range of human sexual behavior."

The caucus' statement also alleges that committee members have compromised their opinions in hopes of gaining approval for a recommendation.

The caucus urges the General Council on Ministries—to which the study panel reports—to reject the committee's proposed changes in the Social Principles.

'Practicing' homosexual fails in attempt at minister's role

United Methodist News Service

A gay United Methodist clergyman has lost an appeal for appointment in the denomination's Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference.

The 56-member conference board of ordained ministry recommended April 8 that the Rev. James Hawk, a probationary member of the conference, must surrender his clergy credentials. A final decision will be made in executive session by the conference's 780 clergy at their June 13-16 annual meeting.

The board's decision came after Mr. Hawk told them April 8 that he could not commit to being a "non-practicing" gay man, as he earlier had stated.

The Rev. Pat Albright, board chairman, said Mr. Hawk's new position made the decision "simple, but painful."

Church law in the United Methodist Book of Discipline bans "self-avowed practicing" homosexuals from the ordained ministry.

The Discipline does not define "practicing."

At their 1990 sessions, Western Pennsylvania conference clergy had adopted a paper defining "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" as persons who verbally acknowledge themselves to be emotionally, mentally, spiritually or physically practicing as homosexual.

Ethicist calls for 'consistency' in Bible's use

Religious News Service

DENVER—An ethicist on United Methodism's Committee to Study Homosexuality says that people who use the Bible to justify their belief that homosexuality is sinful should be consistent in their application of biblical passages to contemporary issues.

To be consistent, said the Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, people should not allow women to teach men and should stone idolaters.

Dr. Wogaman is professor of Christian social ethics at UM-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington.

In a recent lecture at UM-related Iliff School of Theology, Dr. Wogaman also questioned whether the few negative Bible passages about homosexuality "express timeless moral truth" or merely express cultural understandings at the time the passages were written.

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Faith connections

TV GUEST: Janice Love, a United Methodist laywoman and professor of international relations at the University of South Carolina, will be featured May 19 in "Horizons of the Spirit," an NBC-TV special. Dr. Love is a member of the central committee of the World Council of Churches and was a leader at the recent WCC Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia.

BISHOP FEATURED: Bisbop Roy I. Sano (Denver Area) was featured recently in the Sunday magazine section of the "Rocky Mountain News." In the article, Bishop Sano tells writer Alan Dumas how during World War II the witness of a succession of Christians demonstrated to bim as a Japanese-American youtb that faith could overcome the prejudice shown by bis family's internment in Arizona. "Somebody reached across all the racial and cultural barriers and gave me some good news," the bishop told the writer.

Roy Sano

FAITH ON A CHECK: —A handwritten confession of faith appeared recently on 125 $1,000 checks given to Michigan college students by the estate of a woman who attended Deford United Methodist Churcb in Michigan, according to the "Michigan Cbristian Advocate." Two years before she died in 1987, Ethel Coller wrote out her confession based on Romans 10:13 ("For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."). Appending ber confession to tbe checks was tbe idea of her estate lawyer, 93-year-old Leonard Patterson, a member of Applegate United Methodist Cburch since 1922. Her estate, estimated at $4.6 million, includes $1.6 million in the Coller Scholarship Foundation. The scholarships are available to students from two Michigan counties.

HERITAGE SUNDAY: United Methodist congregations across the nation will observe April 28 as "Heritage Sunday." Theme of the annual observance sponsored by the church's General Commission on Archives and History is "Celebrating Our Heritage of Assurance."

EFFORT EXPANDS: A national Pan-Methodist anti-drug abuse program—partly funded by The United Methodist Cburch—has grown to such a point that it will incorporate as a separate non-profit organization. The Pan-Methodist Coalition on Substance Abuse, formed in 1989 to provide anti-drug curriculum, now aims to assist local congregations in efforts to eliminate substance abuse (see UMR, March 22). Its four cooperating denominations are the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal and United Methodist churches.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Windsor Village builds God's kingdom

Relevant messages, people-centered ministries move congregation from tiny to 5,200

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

The church *aflame*

HOUSTON—It's 5:30 on a Saturday afternoon, and young men and women dressed in soft-pink golf shirts drive into the church parking lot and warmly greet the attendants on duty.

This may sound like an unlikely scene for one of the fastest growing churches in the country.

But don't let the description fool you. These men and women in golf shirts are properly attired to serve as ushers for the "come as you are, Saturday night worship celebration" at Windsor Village United Methodist Church.

Even the senior pastor, the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, sports a white golf shirt splashed with purple and pink. But his sermon is anything but casual.

With a scripturally based, thought-provoking, message aimed at the "me generation," he electrifies his hearers and tells them he's preparing them for their work in God's kingdom.

That's why his 5,200-member congregation has dubbed itself "the Kingdom Builders of Windsor Village UMC."

Started with few members

In just nine years, Windsor Village has gone from less than 100 members to more than 5,000. Its weekly worship attendance averages close to 4,000.

HOUSTON—The Rev. Kirbyjon H. Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village United Methodist Church, presents "The Gospel Story" in a casual shirt during a Saturday service. Mr. Caldwell says he hasn't worn a tie in the pulpit in two years.

In 1982, Mr. Caldwell—a student associate pastor at St. Mary's UMC in Houston—was appointed to Windsor Village. At that time, the congregation was mostly Anglo and struggling to survive in a transitional community composed of Anglos, Hispanics, and blacks.

The 28-year pastor soon set the congregation on fire, and in 1985 it burst at the seams. A new sanctuary was built, and the former main building was converted into a family life center.

Today, Windsor Village is bustling witb a multitude of ministries under the direction of a senior pastor, two associates, a minister of music, finance officer, community center director, and AIDS ministry coordinator.

How did they do it? Mr. Caldwell gives these reasons, among others:

- Making the message relevant.
- De-emphasizing clothes versus souls.
- Intentional placement of men in church ministries (see related story below).

Worship is the centerpiece

"The worship experience has always been the centerpiece of the African-American community," says Mr. Caldwell.

All four weekly worship services at Windsor Village begin with prayer and praise, then scripture and inspirational singing, and finally "the Gospel story."

What makes the message different, say Windsor Village Kingdom Builders, is Mr. Caldwell's direct emphasis on "the African-American community."

"The African-American church should help men and women grow in their security and salvation," he says. "We ought not have ministers in our churches who beat people down and don't build them up.

"Racism is killing us in this country. And the tensions due to racism are killing our lives."

"You've got to help men and women grow in their appreciation for themselves as children of God while teaching them to love the Lord."

In describing the eight-month-old Saturday evening worship service, Mr. Caldwell said it is purposefully less formal than the three on Sunday morning as an attempt to attract young people and persons who have no connections with a traditional Sunday service.

He says be decided to dress in casual attire to attract people who may say, "I can't come to that big church because I don't have a nice dress or suit to wear." On Saturdays, Mr. Caldwell wears a casual shirt. On Sundays, the shirt is African-style.

"Historically, African-Americans worked hard Monday through Saturday, and then on Sunday we enjoyed dressing up and going to church," said Mr. Caldwell. "But we've got to remember that one-half of African-American children live below the poverty level.

"The people we're trying to reach may not dress like you or smell like you or look like you. But you can't turn your nose up on them!"

Maurice Hope-Thompson, who edits the church's "Kingdom Builder's Herald" edition of the Reporter, said Mr. Caldwell has succeeded in counteracting "the bad image that some black pastors have portrayed in tbe black community.

"Black Cadillacs, nice clothes, and other lavish things will not build up a congregation in the 1990s," said Mr. Hope-Thompson.

"Kirbyjon feels that dressing up is not important to do ministry. He has not worn a robe in the pulpit for about two years. In the Bible, Jesus didn't dress up first to feed the hungry."

PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

HOUSTON—Emmitt Bryan (left) and Flora Bradley give a worship bulletin to George A. Harris at Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston. A total of 130 ushers serve during four worship services on a typical weekend.

Church has 80 programs

Windsor Village United Methodist Church has at least 80 distinct ministries. Among them:

■ **Wednesday Night Special**—weekly Bible study. As many as 250 persons attend every week. Classes are held for singles, married couples, fathers, pre-schoolers, offering "spiritual food" to children of all ages.'

■ **Cocaine Deliverance Ministry,** for spiritual healing.

■ **Windsor Village 24-hour emotional help telephone hotline,** for all "emotional problems." This includes problems related to marriage, depression, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, and children's behavioral problems.

■ **Pre-marital encounters**—seven one-hour seminars required before any clergy on the Windsor Village staff will perform a wedding ceremony.

■ **Outreach ministries,** such as "Operation Back to School," a clothes collection drive for children who need clothes at the start of school; delivering 1,700 Thanksgiving baskets to needy persons in the community; and offering rent assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Assistance for victims of fires and local diasters.

Ministries to 'brothers' a cornerstone of growth

HOUSTON—"Women can and do keep a church from dying, but if you want a church to grow, you've also got to have some brothers."

That's the assertion of the Rev. Kirbyjon H. Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas. His church has claimed 2,000 men for Christ since 1983.

Willie Lane, minister of social outreach and assimilation and vice-president of the United Methodist Men, said the men's organization unapologetically claims involvement in all male-oriented programming.

That includes a Boy Scout troop; a 100-member male chorus called "The Voices of Thunder"; the "misters and masters program" pairing boys with male role models; a parking-lot ministry; a brothers outreach ministry; and the "Nothin' But the Brothers" ministry.

In "Nothin' But the Brothers," Mr. Caldwell and 100 members of the United Methodist Men get together once a month for a breakfast meeting.

Sessions include prayer time and Bible study as well as speakers on fatherhood, drug and alcohol abuse and issues of identity. The overall theme is helping black men achieve a relationship with God.

Each man who joins the group makes a pledge called "The Brothers' Kingdom Building Covenant." It reads:

"Inasmuch as I am committed to becoming who God wants me to be and doing what God wants me to do; and inasmuch as I do not want the projection that seven out of 10 African-American adult males will be in jail on drugs, unemployed or dead by the year 2000, I commit to the following:

1. I will read the scriptures daily (Psalm 1:2)
2. I will pray for the church daily (James 5:16)
3. I will receive the sacrament of Holy Communion monthly (I Corinthians 11:17-34)
4. I will attend worship service weekly, unless otherwise prevented (Hebrews 10:25)
5. I will give 10 percent of my time and money to God through the Church monthly (Malachi 3:10)
6. I will attend Bible study at least three times monthly, unless otherwise prevented (II Timothy 2:15)
7. I will tell my wife, children and/or parents that I love them at least once a week (I John 3:11 & 18)
8. I will spend at least one uninterrupted hour with my child(ren) at least twice a month (Proverbs 22:6)
9. I will pray for my community daily (Colossians 1:9)
10. I will attend the Nothin' But the Brothers Fellowship monthly (I John 1:3 & 7).

4-week project aims at youths

United Methodist News Service

ST. LOUIS—Directors of United Methodism's official agency in higher education recently applauded plans for a four-week project in June to help youths in danger of abusing drugs and alcohol.

The division, along with presidents of United Methodism's 11 historically black colleges, will cooperate with Clark-Atlanta University to provide academic, educational and spiritual support for low-income, "at-risk" teenagers from the Atlanta area.

Youths will live on campus and attend seminars as part of a churchwide anti-drug abuse emphasis led by the denomination's Council of Bishops, said Janet Hayes of White Plains, N.Y., chairperson of the division's ethnic concerns committee.

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PRESIDENT THE UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION For Christiao Higher Education. The Presidential Searcb Committee invites nominations and applications for the position of President of the United Methodist Foundation for Christian Higher Education. The Foundatioo, located in Nashville, Tennessee, is a nonprofit, charitable organization affiliated with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The Uoited Methodist Church. The President serves as the chief administrative officer and is responsible to tbe Board of Trustees for the fund raising, maoagement, and distributioo for the support of Uoited Metbodist bigher educatioo. Requirements for the positioo include: 1) a dynamie and creative leadership with proven skills and records in fund raising, planniog, communication, and admoistration; 2) understaoding of The United Methodist Church and its connectional system; 3) and commitment to United Methodist higher educatioo. Nominations and applications will be received until April 30, 1991. They should be sent to: George M. Miller, Presidential Search Committee, The United Metbodist Foundation for Christian Higher Education, 1001 Nioeteenth Aveoue, Soutb, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202-0871.

POSITION OPENING: Director of Aooual Conference Relations and Public Policy Program, Division of Higher Educatioo and Ministry, United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Director serves as staff liaison to Annual Conference Boards of Higher Educatioo aod Campus Ministry and to the National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Metbodist Church. The Diretor is responsible for publication activities of the Division. Applications and nominatioos sbould be sent by April 30, 1991, to: Dr. Ken Yamada, Division of Higher Education, United Metbodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nasbville, TN 37202-0871.

LITTLETON, COLORADO — Littleton UMC searching for Minister of Music. Responsibilities include expanding graded vocal and bell choirs, choral and instrumental work and development of fine arts program. Contact: LUMC, 1313 W. Shepperd Ave., 80120.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR (or Diacooal Minister) Of Single and Young Adult Mioistries for an 1800-member growing, dynamic United Methodist Church. Contact Senior Minister, Dr. Jarrell H. Sharp, (915) 694-2571, or send resume to: 3011 West Kansas, Midland, TX 79701.

SOUTHWEST TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE position for Associate Conference Director for Age Group, Family and Nurture Ministries available June 1, 1991; Master's Degree in Christian Education with at least 5 years experience. Full benefits, all expenses plus contiouing education; salary negotiable. For information; Jack D. Heacock, Box 28098, San Antonio, TX 78284.

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UNITED METHODIST CAMPUS MINISTER positioo available, University of Texas Pao American, Edinburg, Texas. Full-time. Salary dependent on education and experience. Masters degree in Bible. Biliogual-Spanisb preferred. Send resume: Rev. Eradio Valverde, P.O. Box 1787, Mission, TX 78572 by May 15, 1991.

MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP — 1700-member UMC. Immediate opening. Seminary degree. Minimum four years experience in church of 1200 or more. Develop comprehensive mioistry identifying, winning, assimilating, equippiog, training laity in discipleship. Salary negotiable. Send resume: Brad Dinsmore, Hyde Park UMC, 500 W. Platt St., Tampa, FL 33606.

POSITION AVAILABLE — Youth Program Director. Full-time. Salary negotiable. Mail resume to: Bellefontaine UMC, 10600 Bellefontaine Road, St. Louis, MO 63137.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY: Saint Stephen United Methodist Church, Amarillo, Texas, is seeking a full-time lay or ordained person for youth, college, young single, plus additional pastoral opportunities. Large program with 80+ active youth. Send resume to: Rev. Jim W. Smitb, 4600 South Western, Amarillo, Tx. 79109 (806) 355-7271.

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IMPROVE YOUR CHURCH OFFICE or small business communications through Desk Top Publishing. Send SASE for additional informatioo: Meisterdesign, P.O. Box 171, Naugatuck, CT 06770, publishers of "The Christian Desk Top Publisher News."

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VISITING NEW ORLEANS? WORSHIP At First Methodist, 3401 Canal Street. Dr. Ken Jones, pastor. Classes: 9:30 a.m., Worship: 11:00 a.m. (504) 488-0856.

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FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR is wanted by First United Methodist Church, Siloam Springs, Arkansas. Inquiries to: Box 429, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.

DISCOUNTED COUNTED CROSS STITCH for church/clergy. Charts/kits. Color brochure/swatches $3.00. A & L Designs, 201 E. Tabor Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19120 (215) 329-7321.

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MUSIC/YOUTH COORDINATOR — Develop and maintain a year-round music and youth program for a 705-member church. Salary commensurate with experience and education. Resume and salary history by May 3, 1991: to First United Methodist Church, P.O. Drawer 27, Port Lavaca, TX 77979.

Evaluating the exorcism of 'Gina'

Religious leaders divided on propriety of televising rite to banish evil

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

Religious leaders and other observers were divided on whether the depiction of an exorcism ritual on a recent ABC-TV "20/20" program did more harm than good.

Defenders say it demonstrated the reality of Satan in the world today. Critics say it could create anxieties in some viewers and divert attention from world problems.

The program, which featured highlights of an exorcism performed on a 16-year-old Florida girl identified only as Gina, was apparently the first time such a ritual was shown on network television other than in fictional presentations.

Filming had approval

The filming had the express approval of Bishop J. Keith Symons of Palm Beach, in whose diocese it took place.

In a statement Bishop Symons said he hoped the broadcast would help "counteract diabolical activities around us."

Skipp Porteous of Housatonic, Mass., a former Assemblies of God minister who claims to have performed dozens of such ceremonies, said that "over time these people that we treated reverted back."

Mr. Porteous, who now calls himself a secular humanist and who heads the Great Barrington Institute for First Amendment Studies, said, "You're simply dealing with mental problems, and they need professional help. The church should not be doing this kind of thing. I've witnessed people who have died because of it."

Similarly, the Rev. Richard Woods, a priest who teaches pastoral care and counseling at Loyola University in Chicago, was quoted as having said that "broadcasting such a dramatic ritual can only serve to exacerbate the spiritual and mental difficulties of susceptible individuals."

The Rev. Richard McBrien, head of the theology department at the University of Notre Dame, voiced fears that an emphasis on exorcisms could detract from concerns of more consequence, such as hunger, homelessness and war.

Speaking on the ABC "Nightline" program after the "20/20" broadcast, Mr. McBrien said that portrayal of the church as being caught up in what he called a "side show" in the face of much greater problems could severely damage its credibility.

'It was a good thing'

But the Rev. James LeBar of the Hudson River Psychiatric Center, the New York priest who helped arrange the filming, told Religious News Service he believes "it was a good thing that we were able to show what possession is and how the church is able to take care of it."

He said the program as aired was done with "great sensitivity and accuracy" and "can clear up a lot of misconceptions."

Among other things, Mr. LeBar noted, the program mentioned that several procedures must be followed before someone can receive a church-authorized exorcism, including psychiatric consultations, so that "you can't just walk in the door and say, 'I want an exorcism.'"

Stephen Strang, editor and publisher of "Charisma" magazine, told Religious News Service that while he had not seen the ABC program, he has "no problem with filming an exorcism if it's done responsibly." He said demon possession is part of "real life ... a spiritual dimension that's just as real as anything else."

Mr. Strang said he welcomed the airing of the program and was "glad to see that attention is being focused on exorcism."

Ralph Martin, a prominent Catholic charismatic lay leader with the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Mich., said he thought the program was "a really risky thing to attempt" but was "a risk well worth taking." He cited what he called "the potential gain of evangelizing people to the reality of Satan and the reality of the church in helping to free people."

UNITED NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Preparing for Bible school

NASHVILLE—Workers from Goodwill Industries package craft items into kits for use in United Methodist vacation Bible schools. Each kit—a different one for each of five age groups—contains materials for three children. The United Methodist Publishing House contracted with the vocational rehabilitation organization to have nearly 85,000 kits assembled.

Review

Film offers a fair hearing in the afterlife

By HILEY H. WARD

Albert Brooks, like Woody Allen, lays on levels of messages in his movie satires and comedies. Both Brooks and Allen revel in, even thrive on, depression.

Their stories are about little men and women weighted down with existential angst, who somehow learn something, whether they get out of their predicaments or not.

Mr. Brooks, as director and writer of "Defending Your Life," in which he stars, continues to satirize American life as he did in "Lost in America."

About being good

"Defending Your Life" is about being good and responsible and having courage.

Daniel Miller (Mr. Brooks) comes up lacking these qualities under scrutiny in the afterlife.

In the outset, Miller gets wiped out in a collision with a bus. When he wakes up in strange surroundings, he at first doesn't know where he is. But he quickly learns that the Atlantic City-type convention resort hotel, where he awakens, is a part of a community which is a holding area for judgment day.

In keeping with biblical injunctions, one is accountable for his or her transgressions. But in this movie's Judgment City, like being in a good democracy, one is entitled to a hearing and legal defense of his or her life.

Miller gets his day in court. A corporate legal beagle-type, Bob Diamond (Rip Torn), flamboyantly defends him.

GEFFEN FILM COMPANY PHOTO

Daniel Miller (Albert Brooks) falls in love with the good and courageous Julia (Meryl Streep) in the new film, "Defending Your Life."

There is no literal heaven or hell, according to lawyer Diamond, although, he points out, some believe being sent back to Los Angeles is close to the idea of going to hell.

Although Miller is depressed and confused at first, his outlook on life (death) immeasurably picks up when he meets the effervescent, smiling Julia (Meryl Streep) at a Judgment City comedy club.

They predictably fall in love, as this sweet movie proceeds to give credence to the prevailing opinion that earthlings never function on more than 2 to 3 percent of their brain power.

Bound for a higher place

Julia is bound for a higher place (or planet) and Miller is likely to be sent back to the terrible earth.

It's all fun, as the movie makes such salient points as:

✓ Even little things in life will be remembered on judgment day;

✓ Humankind's normal collective pursuits, such as warring all the time, are silly and stupid;

✓ Humans are individually important and yet are absorbed in a grander scheme of things.

And, of course, as in "Ghost," love transcends terrestrial and extraterrestrial barriers.

The theology in "Defending Your Life" is interreligious.

For Protestant and Christianity in general, there's accounting for one's sins and a day of reckoning; for Asian religions, a reincarnation; for Catholic Christianity, a place of limbo or waiting (something that the modern Catholic catechists ignore); and, for Judaism, emphasis on a good and charitable life.

Yet there is something fatalistic beneath all of this euphoria and wonderful one-liners and sight gags. Perhaps all judgment days must have a sense of fatalism or finalism to them.

Nevertheless it's a fresh dimension to bring a sense of democracy and of hope by enunciating the possibility of a fair hearing in the afterlife. It is heartening to know that the little man still figures in the scheme of things.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalms 8:4 KJV)

Pretty important.

Dr. Ward is a journalism professor at Temple University in Philadelphia. He frequently reviews films for the Reporter.

Expert: Religious ads on TV reinforce, not recruit

Religious News Service

Religious public service announcements will make it to the small screen if they convey a feel-good message, avoid controversy and refrain from trying to convert—that's just the nature of television, says a professor of communication at the University of Louisville.

As for those denominations fortunate enough to have their spots selected for free air time, don't expect a rush of newcomers.

The ads are usually more effective at reinforcing identification with a church than they are in persuading new people to join, writes John P. Ferre.

Mr. Ferre describes his findings about the effectiveness of religious television spots in a chapter on that subject in "Channels of Belief: Religion and American Commercial Television," a collection of articles published by Iowa State University Press.

He cites previous surveys that found differences in the way people feel about religious advertising.

A 1985 survey by Stephen W. McDaniel, for instance, found that the general public doubted the appropriateness of churches using radio and television to advertise their theological beliefs, while clergy favored it.

Another survey, conducted for the former American Lutheran Church, found that non-churchgoers favored such advertising slightly more than churchgoers did.

The communication professor notes the frequent criticism that television is a one-way medium and therefore inappropriate for religious content.

However, he says, such critics accept other communication channels that are just as one-directional. Books, including the Bible, are such channels, but critics do not question them.

The communications specialist acknowledges, however, that "television is not the neutral conduit that many religious broadcasters assume it to be. Its visual and temporal characteristics help shape the form of televised religious discourse."

History of Hymns

Wesley's striving for perfection seen in hymn

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels thy blood
So freely shed for me.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Charles Wesley's hymn, based on "Make me a clean heart, O God" (Psalms 51:10), was written and published in 1742.

In it is expressed a yearning for maturity in Christian love by the power of the Spirit of God.

John Wesley believed that Christians, by the presence of the Holy Spirit, can grow continually in grace and Christlikeness. This is a frequent theme of Wesleyan hymnody.

This striving for perfectness in Christian character is seen in the stanzas of "O for a heart to praise my God." The fourth stanza lets us sing:

A heart in every thought renewed
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine.

The musical setting of this text in some of our hymnals was composed in 1792 by Mr. Thomas Haweis.

First apprenticed to a surgeon and apothecary, Mr. Haweis felt called to the ministry. He was ordained in the Church of England in 1757.

While he served as an Anglican minister, he was criticized for his Methodist leanings. He had a great interest in missionary activities and took an active part in the organization of the London Missionary Society.

He enjoyed a close friendship with John Newton while Mr. Newton was minister at St. Mary Woolnoth, London. Mr. Haweis wrote a number of hymn tunes, but only "Richmond" remains in common usage.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

So True!

"Reverend, your sermon hit home!"
Exclaimed the woman, all aglow;
"Every thing you said today
Applies to someone I know."
—MURIEL KOVINOW

Dear Deborah

Readers say they want yellow ribbons, American flag displayed in churches

Dear Deborah:

I am really angry at Alice's letter in your Feb. 8 edition. The yellow ribbons say "I care, please come home safe."

I would not attend a church that did not support our troops. It doesn't mean I agree with war—I hate it. Yellow means please come home safe.

Mother of a teenager in the Gulf

Dear Deborah:

The Feb. 8 issue carried a letter from someone whose pastor would not let them use yellow ribbons in church and also said the American Flag did not belong there either.

I am deeply disturbed by an attitude that seems to have developed in the United Methodist churches since Viet Nam and have written several letters to my church but have never had the courtesy of a reply.

Three score years and ten

Dear Writers:

You both have written long, eloquent and passionate letters and I appreciate your willingness to share with me. Both were too long to print in full, so I have tried to summarize your views.

Both the yellow ribbons and the American Flag are symbols that mean a lot to many people.

In the United Methodist Church there is room for a full spectrum of opinions and preferences about these and the many other symbols which can be found in our church buildings.

You have both expressed very strong opinions, but others would disagree and feel just as strongly as you do.

I wish that somehow we could all respect the people who differ from us and be able to share our perspectives in a way that would enrich us all.

Is that not what it means to follow the Prince of Peace?

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Scholar says Holocaust naysayers merit inquiry

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—Historians who deny or minimize the Holocaust should not be debated, but their ideas should be studied and "exposed," according to the author of a book about how the American press covered the Holocaust while it was taking place.

Deborah E. Lipstadt, author of "Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945," discusses the Holocaust "revisionists" and how she thinks they should be treated in an article in the latest issue of "Dimensions: A Journal of Holocaust Studies," published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

She notes that deniers generally acknowledge Nazi anti-Semitism but maintain that there was no organized attempt to wipe out the Jews. Many revisionists attribute the deaths of Jews during the war to wartime deprivations.

Other revisionists acknowledge the existence of the Holocaust but say it was only one of many massacres in history.

According to Ms. Lipstadt, revisionists must not simply be brushed off because "their books and journals have been given an academic format, and they've worked hard to insinuate themselves into the arena of legitimate historical debate and deliberation."

In addition, she says, they have "strengthened their ties with influential political groups both in the United States and Europe."

Ms. Lipstadt says there is "a danger in assuming that because these (revisionists') arguments are so outlandish they can simply be ignored."

She notes that the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a forged anti-Semitic document that first appeared at the turn of the century, "has enjoyed a sustained and vibrant life despite the fact that it was long ago exposed as a forgery."

While acknowledging that some teachers believe the revisionist view should at least be mentioned in Holocaust studies courses, Ms. Lipstadt says, "Those who are committed to the liberal idea of dialogue fail to recognize that certain views are beyond the bounds of rational discourse.

"After all, these views do not emanate from rational or honest inquiry.... Unlike true scholars, they have little if any respect for data or evidence. Their commitment is to an ideology and their 'findings' are shaped to support it."

The scholar concludes that "the deniers hope to achieve their goals by winning recognition as a legitimate scholarly cadre."

Exposing who they are will rob them of legitimacy, she said.

Create Models

Networking Nationwide

Louisiana CrossLines
3175 Scenic Highway
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70805
(504) 355-9472

Legislative Alert

Legislative Goals

Louisiana CrossLines — Consultation Process

As a conference resource, Louisiana CrossLines works with local churches to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged children and their families.

It helps churches:

1. determine the needs of children and their families through workshops on community assessment, and the researching and reporting of local statistics. CrossLines may refer churches to appropriate agencies or institutions in their communities for this information.
2. identify the resources of the congregation:
   — buildings and other facilities
   — within the membership (educators, lawyers, medical personnel, social service providers, child advocates).
3. develop skills to respond to community needs:
   — training and workshops
   — individual church consultations
   — model sharing
4. implement new programs that serve children and families:
   — bringing together relevant agencies and service providers
   — developing program strategies
   — assist in obtaining grants and exploring other funding sources

Louisiana CrossLines offers different kinds of consultation:

1. **Technical Assistance** — working with an existing program (after-school care, food pantry etc.) to determine better ways of program management.
2. **Program Development** — involves on-going consultation with a group within a church or a cluster of churches (e.g a cooperative parish) to help them understand the needs of children and their families and to implement programs or services which respond to those needs. This can take place over several months through the life of a program.
3. **Workshops/Leadership Training** — CrossLines designs and convenes conferences or workshops to provide indepth discussions of specific issues. Some conferences are for service providers; other workshops offer volunteer training or leadership development around mission concerns.
4. **Presentations** — CrossLines is available to make presentations on issues affecting children and their families. In the context of worship, or a mission committee, United Methodist Women's group or to a task force, CrossLines can provide valuable information about programs, statistics, funding and successful models to interested groups. A twenty minute video entitled "What One Church Can Do" will also show churches a variety of responses to family needs coming from the local church.

Networking Nationwide

Louisiana CrossLines Create Models

CrossLines Trains Local Churches for Mission

COMPASSION

TO

COMMITMENT

WHO: FOR ALL THOSE CONCERNED ABOUT MISSION AND OUTREACH IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

WHAT: Theological Basis for Outreach
Community Needs Assessment: Who Needs What and Why?
Developing Outreach: goals, strategies, budgets, and program design
Resources and Networking: in the church, the community and the conference
Planning and Envisioning: sharing our experiences in outreach

For further questions, please contact:
The Reverend Elizabeth T. Irvine
3175 Scenic Highway
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
(504) 355-9472

CrossLines Helps Initiate Local Projects

New Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers Projects

Interfaith Clearinghouse
c/o Abbott Loop
Christian Center
2626 Abbott Road
Anchorage, AK 99507
Contact: Deidra Bailey
Phone: (907)345-6084

Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Northeast Georgia, Inc.
430 Prior Street, SE
Gainesville, GA 30501
Contact: Susan Ferrell
Phone: (404)535-5445

Allen Interfaith Coalition for Caring, Inc.
P. O. Box 486
Oakdale, LA 71463
Contact: Norma Garlington, PhD
Phone: (318) 335-4615

Central Minnesota Interfaith Caregivers
P.O.Box 26
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
Contact: Greg Reigstad
Phone: (612)252-3474

Greater Greenville Interfaith Coalition, Inc.
2000 East Sixth Street
Greenville, NC 27858
Contact: Connie Kuenzi
Phone: (919)757-0303

Nashville Interfaith Volunteer Respite Caregivers
Belmont United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 120098
Nashville, TN 37212
Contact: Rev. Virginia Kessen
Phone: (615)383-0832

Yakima Indian Reservation Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers
Box 155
Toppenish, WA 98948
Contact: Marie Miller
Phone: (509)877-7209

Istrouma Summer Camp

Sponsoring Community Forums

HEALTH CARE CRISIS!
Including Public Testimony and Special Guest Speakers
Dr. Gary Wiltz/Rosemae Broussard from a
Community Health Center in Franklin, Louisiana, St. Tammany
Area Community Leaders
Co-sponsored by
St. Tammany Health Care Coalition
Louisiana Health Care Campaign; Louisiana Primary Care Association; CrossLines/United Methodist Church; Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Rainbow Childcare Center; Northminster Presbyterian Church; Voice of St. Tammany; Mayor's Office, City of Slidell; Crusade for Christ Outreach Ministries; LaCombe United Methodist Church.

Participants are shown during the Health Care Seminar held in Slidell.

Legislative Alert

Legislative Liaison Committee and Louisiana CrossLines
Upcoming Legislation
Legislative Goals
Policies Affecting Louisiana's Poor

1. COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH CARE

Community-based health care (or Community Health Centers) provide routine and preventative medical services such as check-ups, monitoring chronic diseases, prenatal and well-baby care, preventative dental services and treatment for minor injuries and emergencies. Typical providers of such services are family physicians, nurse-practioners, general internists and the like. Services are provided in a clinic setting. Clinics are controlled by people in the community (recipients of clinic services traditionally make up at least half of the board of directors).

Services are made available on a sliding fee scale and no one is turned away. These services are primarily (though not exclusively) made use of by the uninsured, low-income or working poor or for those who simply have no access to a source for routine medical care. To date there are eight such federally funded clinics in Louisiana.

Legislative Objective —

For state monies to be made available for new community-based clinics (start-up funds) or for the expansion of existing centers.

2. EXPANSION OF MEDICAID ACCESS

Early, high quality, comprehensive prenatal care is the most effective means for reducing the state's high rate of infant mortality, access to prenatal care for all pregnant women has not been achieved in Louisiana. Especially vulnerable are those poor women not covered by Medicaid or employer-provided insurance coverage. The goal of this legislation will be to ensure that all pregnant women and infants, regardless of their economic status, geographic location or ethnic background have access to appropriate health care services.

Legislative Objective —

1. Expand eligibility for Medicaid services for all infants and pregnant women with an income up to 185% of the federal poverty income guidelines.
2. Also extend eligibility for Medicaid services to children born after September 30, 1983, who are at least six and not yet nineteen, and whose family incomes are below 100% of federal poverty income guidelines.
3. Base eligibility for Medicaid services for pregnant adolescents on the income of the pregnant adolescent and not on the income of her parents.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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ising My Maker ile I've Breath!

He sat before me with tears in his eyes. An old man with failing health; a once robust human being whose body was ravaged with disease and who was concerned about his growing crankiness and forgetfulness; but a twinkle came into his eye as he said softly, "I can't do very much any more, but I'll still praise my maker while I've breath!"

That is precisely the note I want to capture in my own life. While I am somewhere between "blue lagoon" and "Golden Pond," I do find myself reflecting on the aging process. Perhaps it's because of the joys and pains of sharing my father's twilight years.

Karl Rahner was asked: "How do you cope with the fact that growing old brings with it a diminishment of energy?" He replied,: "I can cope with this only as I patiently accept it. If I realize that I can no longer climb 15,000-foot mountains, then I will simply stay at the base. And if I realize that I can no longer really do productive intellectual work six hours a day, then I'll simply work only two or three hours and be satisfied with that."

Recently I was in a nursing home praying for a woman who was not responsive. I stopped my prayer and began slowly praying "now I lay me down to sleep . . .". I am certain she heard.

William B. Oden

May Conference Calendar

3	Church Women United, May Fellowship Day
3-5	Singles' Weekend, Broadmoor Church, Baton Rouge, with Terry Hershey
4	Centenary College Commencement
10	Signing of Conference Center Documents, First Church, Alexandria, 10:00 a.m.
11	Dedication of Dulac Community Center, 2:00 p.m.
12	Children's Homes Offering
12	Mother's Day
15-16	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
16-19	Cursillo No. 23, Tall Timbers
18	Dedication of Retired Ministers Home in Slidell (1558 Wildwood Drive)
23-26	Third Annual Meeting of the Student Forum of The United Methodist Church, Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa
26	Peace with Justice Sunday

Around the Conference

Students of the Wesley Foundation at McNeese State University in Lake Charles are shown after painting the Merryville UMC during the fall of 1990. The group from McNeese added a new look of beauty and of life to the Merryville church. Campus Minister for McNeese is the Rev. Wayne Taylor. Pastor of Merryville is the Rev. A. Swindell Hodges Jr.

Pictured are ladies from the Creative Crafters of Lakeview UMC, Shreveport, presenting handmade Lenten paraments for the pulpit and communion table of Fellowship UMC, Bossier City to the Rev. Greg Davis. Fellowship is the newest United Methodist church in the Shreveport District. The Rev. Doug Cain is pastor of Lakeview.

Bishop Announces Appointment of Three New District Superintendents

Bishop William B. Oden has announced the appointment of three ministers to the office of District Superintendent. The Reverend George A. Duerson, current pastor of Trinity UMC in Ruston, will become the District Superintendent of the New Orleans area; the Reverend Doctor C. Gerald Richardson, current pastor of Christ UMC in Shreveport, will become the District Superintendent of the Acadiana area; and the Reverend Doctor J. Philip Woodland, current minister of University UMC in Baton Rouge, will become the District Superintendent of the Monroe area.

The Reverend George A. Duerson

Dr. C. Gerald Richardson

Dr. J. Philip Woodland

George A. Duerson

The Reverend George A. Duerson is a north Louisianian by birth. He grew up in Shreveport and left Louisiana only to attend college at Southern Methodist University, seminary at Yale Divinity School and a masters program at the State University of Iowa.

When he returned, Mr. Duerson pastored the Northeastern University Wesley Foundation, First UMC in Lutcher, Kenner UMC, Denham Springs' First UMC, St. Matthew's in Metairie, and Trinity UMC in Ruston. He also served as a District Superintendent of the Alexandria District.

He was a delegate to the Jurisdictional Conference in 1988 and has also served as a member of the Boards and or Committees of Ordained Ministry, Higher Education and Campus Ministries, Status and Role of Women, the Episcopacy, the Louisiana Interchurch Conference, the United Methodist Foundation, Methodist Children's Home, People's Community Center, and the New Orleans District Council on Ministries.

He and his wife Linda are excited about returning to the New Orleans area where they have spent most of their ministry. As Mr. Duerson says, "we love New Orleans, and already know many of the laity there." Since he has served as District Superintendent previously, he is also "eager to see if what [he] has learned can fit into the New Orleans situation."

The Duersons are looking forward to being with their children again as well. Their son Doug is an intern at Ochsner Hospital in New Orleans and their daughter Denise is graduating in May from the LSU School of Nursing.

C. Gerald Richardson

Dr. C. Gerald Richardson is a native of Jena. He graduated from Jena High School in 1964, received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana College, his Master of Theology degree from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, and his Doctor of Ministry degree from The Austin School of Theology. He received additional clinical training in counseling through the pastoral care department at Central Louisiana State Hospital where he worked as an assistant on the Chaplain's staff.

Dr. Richardson has served pastorates in the Tyler District of the Texas Conference. He was associate pastor at First UMC, Lake Charles, and at Broadmoor UMC, Baton Rouge. He has also served as pastor of Caddo Heights/Keithville, Mansfield/Grand Cane, and Christ UMC, all in the Shreveport District.

Dr. Richardson serves on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry where he is chair of the Committee on Associate Members and Local Pastors. He has previously served as Candidacy Registrar for the Board of Ministry. He has also served on the Conference Commission on Equitable Salaries.

At the district level Dr. Richardson has served as chair of the Shreveport District Committee on Finance, and chair of the Shreveport District Board of Missions and Church Extension. He currently serves on the Shreveport District Committee on Ministry.

In addition to his pastoral service, Dr. Richardson has written several articles which have appeared in THE TIMES of Shreveport covering both devotional and social concerns, a dicotomy that reflects his overall approach to the ministry. He says that he enjoys the "people side" of his job, but also enjoys "the side that relates to ideas."

He looks forward to the "awesome responsibility and challenge" of being on the District and sees one of his major goals there as church revitalization. In particular, Dr. Richardson says, he sees the personal development of the ministry of clergy and spouses, a primary concern.

Dr. Richardson and his wife Carolyn have two sons, Charles David, age 16, and Jon Mark, age 12.

J. Philip Woodland

Dr. J. Philip Woodland was born in Alexandria, but attended public schools and college (LSU) in Baton Rouge. He received his Bachelor of Divinity from Yale University as well as a Doctor of Divinity from Centenary College.

He served pastorates at Pine Grove UMC in Pine Grove, Broadmoor UMC in Baton Rouge, St. Luke's UMC in New Orleans, First UMC in Slidell and University UMC in Baton Rouge.

Dr. Woodland has served as a member of the Board of Directors for the University Campus Ministry, LSU; Wesley Foundation, Southern University; the Istrouma Methodist Mission Center; and Friends of Public Education. He also has been a three-time delegate to General Conference.

Additionally, Dr. Woodland has been chairperson of the Louisiana Conference Board of Pensions and of the COM Legislative Liaison Committee. In 1990 he was president as well of the Greater Baton Rouge Federation of Churches and Synagogues.

He and his wife Madeline are the parents of three children, Randy, Amy and Laura. They are both looking forward to this "new form of ministry," but hold the local congregations near to their hearts. In fact, Dr. Woodland's hope is that the district office he serves will "provide the resources needed to strengthen the local congregation."

Dr. Stone W. Caraway to be Conference Treasurer

Bishop William B. Oden has announced that the Reverend Doctor Stone W. Caraway will become the new Executive Director Administration/Treasurer effective at Annual Conference. He replaces Dr. James J. Caraway who will be retiring from that position at the same time.

Dr. Stone Walker Caraway was born in a Meridian, Mississippi parsonage on September 6, 1933. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Centenary College in 1954, his Master of Theology from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in 1957 and the Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Centenary College in 1981.

Dr. Caraway is currently serving as Senior Minister of Asbury UMC in Lafayette. Prior to his appointment to Asbury, he served as pastor of the following United Methodist Churches: Jefferson of Baton Rouge; Vivian-First Church of Pineville; St. Paul's of Monroe; and Noel of Shreveport. He also served as Superintendent of the New Orleans/Slidell District.

He has served on a wide variety of agencies and boards on the local, district and conference levels and has been a leader in interdenominational and secular organizations as well.

Dr. Caraway says that he has especially enjoyed the "administrative part of his ministry." This has shown itself in the considerable success that Dr. Caraway has enjoyed in that aspect of his work. For example, during Dr. Caraway's term as Chairman of the Conference Board of Pensions, a Crusade was conducted resulting in $3,700,000 which continues to undergird the ministerial pension program.

Also, while serving as the New Orleans/Slidell District Superintendent, the district showed a net increase in membership each year and, during his last three years, the district was either first or second among the nine districts in percentage of Conference Apportionments paid. Dr. Caraway is pleased to have a record which shows that his churches paid their Conference Apportionments in full during each of his thirty years as a pastor.

He and his wife, the former Eleanor Lynn DeBray of Winnfield, have one daughter, Mrs. C. A. (Hap) Martin III, and two grandsons. They both look forward to Dr. Caraway's "serving in this new relationship with the church as a means of continuing to fulfill [his] calling to ministry."

Dr. Stone W. Caraway

Persons — Churches — Events

A dream has become a reality for the members of **Maplewood UMC in Sulphur** through the planning of some very special people. A special thanks is also extended to the building committee of the church for its dedication. The mortgage for the sanctuary was recently paid in full. Maplewood was officially organized May, 1944; the educational building was completed in 1961; and construction of the fellowship hall was completed in 1974. Members moved into the new sanctuary June 15, 1984. Bishop William B. Oden is scheduled to attend a special dedication worship service on May 26. The Rev. Howard B. Childs is pastor.

* * *

The large narthex window of **St. Paul UMC in Shreveport**, located near the entrance of the church, has been completed with the support of the Conference and District. Contributions, along with a special donation by church member, Dr. Selcy S. Collins, in memory of her husband, Mr. Leonard F. Collins, helped fund the window. St. Paul UMC is listed on the National Register. The Rev. G. L. Thomas is pastor.

* * *

Recently, the Task Force for VISION 2000 at **First UMC in Oakdale** set aside an entire month as a time for presenting the scriptural basis for entering into a visionary process. On each Sunday of the month, a different person presented a vision or visions taken from the Scriptures and explained how these visions relate to our Church today. These members, using about five minutes of service time, appeared unannounced, dressed in costumes of Biblical times, and presented the Scriptures and its contemporary relevance as it applied to dreams, visions, and possibilities for a more active, vital and caring church ministry. The Rev. Louis M. Coppage Jr. is pastor.

Another issue worthy of study and discussion by United Methodists is the proposal for Alternative Curriculum. The proposal is not endorsed by the committee, but we feel it merits careful consideration. The editorial reprinted below from the July 19, 1990 edition of the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate, states well the case for the Alternative Curriculum.

Editorial

A reminder from the Kurds: 'Befriend the friendless'

The Kurds of northern Iraq have a saying that should grip the conscience of people everywhere, particularly Christians:

"Kurds have no friends."

According to a recent TV newscast, the pessimism embedded in those four words results from generations of oppression and betrayal by whatever government controls the border lands where the Kurds live.

Sadly, their current plight as refugees from the brutality of Saddam Hussein, compounded by sluggish efforts by U.S. military forces from bases in Saudi Arabia to extend them humanitarian aid, has served to reinforce their bitter belief that they "have no friends."

Viewed in that light, U.S. government-sponsored relief efforts now underway to aid the Kurdish people are past due.

Thousands stranded in icy mountain passes without food and shelter or minimal sanitation facilities have died. Relief officials predict that the number of dead will increase dramatically, aid or no aid.

As Christians, we are called to befriend those who live under conditions that make them feel hopeless and friendless. An old hymn says it well:

"Let sorrow be ended, the friendless be friended,
"Oh, help somebody today."

We believe Christians should respond to the unfolding disaster of the Kurds on at least three levels.

First, we should add our voices to those urging the United States and other governments to expand efforts to rescue the Kurdish people.

Those efforts should include both short-term survival aid and long-term efforts to address the generations-old political and economic instability in the region—the root causes, as it were, of the "friendlessness."

Second, we should respond immediately and generously to the appeal by the United Methodist Committee on Relief for financial support of church-related relief efforts in the Middle East, including the Kurds (see related article elsewhere in this issue).

Essential as government assistance is, church-based assistance often reaches those in need more quickly and with much less red tape than government aid.

Contributions should be made through your local church and designated for Advance No. 601740-2.

Finally, we should confess, both corporately and individually, that as long as there are people in the world who believe that they "have no friends," our mandate to love our neighbors as Christ has loved us remains unfulfilled.

As we reach out to the Kurds, we also should identify people in our own community—or perhaps even in our own congregation—who may have reason to feel that they have no friends and take steps to prove them wrong.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

A Kurdish mother and her badly sun-blistered baby remind us poignantly of the hazards they and other refugees face from exposure, hunger and disease. "Friendless" people like the Kurds deserve our immediate attention.

Here I Stand

We should follow our children's lead to care

By MARTIN EGELSTON

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Martin Egelston is a member of First United Methodist Church, Evanston, Ill., (Northern Illinois Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (three typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

In suburban areas, the "What's in it for me?" outlook among residents often snares young couples.

Do they attend church? Yes. Churches become places to meet other influential people and see that children learn good principles. If leaders are not alert, over time churches reinforce these values in the membership. Prominent acquaintances and successful investors rather than Christ and biblical leaders become the models of Christianity.

To direct the congregation to the richness in human lives and away from riches in goods and services, our ministers have been teaching the importance of prayer and caring for others through the Sunday morning children's message.

Children are receptive to the ministers' requests for them to share joys for which they want to offer thanks to God. They describe birthdays, holidays, reunions, births, trips, visits, recovery, gifts.

When the ministers ask for what concerns they want to pray, they mention family illness and sadness, tragedies in the news, injuries, unemployment, safe trips for loved ones. The prayer incorporates these joys and concerns, and its repetition each Sunday reinforces the importance of prayer.

If the children can speak spontaneously of joys and needs, so can we adults.

The children are leading adults to a more caring and praying responsibility. If the children speak spontaneously of joys and needs, so can we adults.

The first few times it was not easy for us to share publicly our thanks and concerns. But the ministers have moved out of the pulpit and down among us in the aisles where it is easier to break the uncomfortable silence.

Unquestionably, the congregation is thinking more about the well-being of others and God's blessings. Worshipers sense a sincerity and attention to prayer in those around them. The approach has not replaced the weekly prayer group meetings but instead has increased the participation and lengthened the requests.

By praying for one another, the healing that we have requested for others is mending our hearts and minds along with our priorities. Soon we will catch up with the children.

Letters to the Editor

I'm flabbergasted that we don't recognize deacon's historic role

If you have accurately reported in "Faith Connections" of March 29, the statement attributed to the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, then I am absolutely flabbergasted!

By stating that "United Methodism is the only mainline denomination which requires . . . a two-step process" (referring to the transitional order of deacon), the commission has told us an awful lot on how little it either knows about or dialogues with other Christian Communions.

In reality, the order of deacon, from very early on in Christian tradition, has served quite splendidly both as a permanent order and as a transitional one in the churches to which most Christians have belonged.

Allison Cambre
Houston, Texas

Baptism furor grieves me

I'm grieved by the amount of controversy surrounding the work of the Baptism Study Committee (see UMR, March 15).

I'm especially concerned that the uproar seems to be about beliefs that are not new for Methodist people: that baptism is primarily about God's grace, not human response; and that baptism is unrepeatable.

These faith assertions are in the current Book of Discipline, and, as far as I know, in all past editions.

So why the furor now? I fear that, far from being "too inflexible," we have been too lax in the teaching of our heritage and our discipline (an unpopular word!). Apparently, we have allowed faith assertions from other, more dominant traditions to become normative to us. Methodists have stopped believing Methodist doctrine.

No, "faith" (in the sense that some are using the word) is not the basis for church membership. God's grace is the basis, for that and for everything else that counts.

Ron McCreary
Fort McCoy, Florida

Clarification

With reference to the article and editorials in the Reporter of March 8 and 15, the following clarification is necessary for a proper understanding of what happened at the close of the last meeting of the Book of Worship Committee.

My statement to the committee had three parts:

First, I expressed my appreciation for the fellowship and my gratefulness for having had a chance to get to know every one of the members. In doing so, I sincerely expressed how I felt.

Second, I quietly asked that my name be omitted from the report and from the Book of Worship.

Third, I informed the group that I would not be attending the next meeting of the committee.

That was all I said. I did not criticize, attack or speak negatively of any person or persons.

As for the editorials in the Reporter of March 15, I strongly feel that I have been unjustly included, since I made it very clear that I did not resign, nor did I "walk out" or "break fellowship." I continued to work with the same people in the Section on Worship [of the General Board of Discipleship] later that same week.

Regarding the information that I would not be present at the next meeting, the United Methodist News Service article that appeared in the Reporter read into my absence something that I did not say.

The reason for being absent from the next meeting is quite simply that I shall represent the Northern Europe Central Conference at the meeting of the World Methodist Council and its executive committee, as I have done for the last 20 years as a bishop of The United Methodist Church.

The World Methodist Council meeting takes place at the same time as the next meeting of the Book of Worship Committee. I tried to have the meeting time for the latter changed, but it was impossible and I had to make a choice.

As for the more general question of whether it is right for Christians to "walk out," I would like to make the following observations:

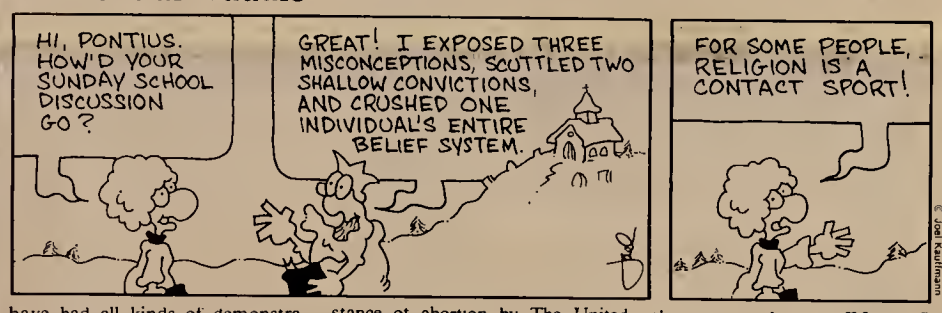
1) It is possible that fellowship already has been broken by the majority and that the minority "walks out" as a consequence of that fact.

2) I find it rather strange that we have had all kinds of demonstrations, boycotts, walk-outs etc. in the socio-political realm, but when the very core of our faith is at stake, then it suddenly becomes very wrong [to walk out].

3) We have a good precedent in our own history for "walking out." When Molther and his followers in the Fetter Lane Society began advocating doctrines which could not be supported by Scripture, John and Charles Wesley first tried to convince them of their errors. When that did not succeed, they walked out on July 10, 1740. If it was right at that time, would it not be so today as well?

Ole E. Borgen
Wilmore, Kentucky

Pontius' Puddle



Emphasize contraception

Much has been written about the stance of abortion by The United Methodist Church. It seems to me that if more emphasis were put on prevention, whether through the use of contraceptives, responsibility towards one's body and/or education concerning all aspects of conception and care of babies, the issue of abortion would be ameliorated (see UMR, March 22).

In these times, unplanned pregnancies can be averted if proper measures are used. Babies conceived would then be a blessing, the result of true love and would be loved. God has given us minds and we honor Him by using them.

Shirley M. Edwards
Rockville, Connecticut

Thank you for article

We want to express our appreciation to you and your staff for the fine article in the April 5 issue of the Reporter on the Stoody-West Fellowship winners. Associate Editor Diane Balay did a good job of picking persons who have held the fellowship and have made good contributions as a result of their added training.

Many thanks for this well-done special article, showing some of the good that has come through those who have studied under the fellowship that honors Dr. Ralph Stoody and the writers of this note.

Arthur and Vera West
Lebanon, Ohio

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What others are saying

"I'm convinced more adults are engaged in serious, in-depth Bible study than ever before in American history. The majority of that is not happening on Sunday morning."
—The Rev. Lyle Schaller, church growth expert

* * *

"Through time the church has had influence and sometimes that influence has been quite negative. Yet the church is, for all its frailty, the force that consistently calls upon culture to monitor its own values and behaviors."
—Sally Brown Geis, director, Iliff Institute, Denver

* * *

"The enemy of religion is not the unnecessary things we do, but the necessary things we do without a sense of proportion—so that tokens, instruments, words, symbols come to loom larger than the very thing they are supposed to represent and encourage."
—Bishop Ben Oliphint, Houston Area

* * *

"People with AIDS are often leery of being visited by a church person. Some feel I've come to 'save' them or preach at them. There's a wall with many, but during a visit that wall can be broken down. I visit AIDS patients to let them know that not all Christians are out to cast the first stone."
—Jessie Lee Ciupek, Vallejo, Calif., in the book, "Samaritan's Imperative."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"But we would not have you ignorant, bretheren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope." (RSV)

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
_____	___ :	_____

(Last week's answer: Romans 12:6,7)

Readings for week of April 29

Monday: Psalms 22:25-31
Tuesday: Acts 8:14-25
Wednesday: Acts 8:26-40
Thursday: John 15:1-8
Friday: John 15:9-11
Saturday: 1 John 4:1-6
Sunday: 1 John 4:7-12

Recovering a Methodist tradition after 50 years!

BELIEVE LOVE OBEY

CLASS LEADERS

There was a time when Methodism was noted for its methodical discipleship. The genius of this was the class meeting and the key to the class meeting was the ***class leader***. In 1988, the office of ***class leader*** reappeared in *The United Methodist Discipline* after an absence of 50 years. ***Class leaders*** can once again be the key to vital congregations and faithful disciples by guiding church members in the basics of Christian living in the world.

On May 19, 1991, Pentecost Sunday, the Office of Covenant Discipleship and Christian Formation will host a 90-minute teleconference to launch this new initiative.

Teleconference: May 19, 1991
Cokesbury Satellite Television Network
West Star 5, Channel 4 (Horizontal)

7:30 pm Eastern Standard Time
6:30 pm Central Standard Time
5:30 pm Mountain Standard Time
4:30 pm Pacific Time

For information about viewing parties in your area, please write or call

The General Board of Discipleship
Office of Covenant Discipleship and Christian formation
P. O. Box 840
Nashville, Tennessee 37202-0840
Telephone: 615\340-7010

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Faith watch

EFFECTS OF WAR: With reference to the Persian Gulf war, Argentine Methodist Bishop Aldo Etchegoyen told the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries spring meeting that "the United Nations has become the doormat where the powerful brush the mud off their boots." "Militarism at the service of the powerful causes death, and this is not in agreement with the Gospel," he added. "The Persian Gulf war has been the clearest example today of militarism around the world. This has caused us to think that a barrel of oil is worth more than the life of a soldier."

REMEMBER LIBERIA: United Methodists are asked to express their concern for Liberia by calling and writing their congressional representatives in support of legislation to provide the West African country with recovery and relief. The General Board of Global Ministries also asks members of annual conferences to wear green and white ribbons of solidarity at 1991 sessions; respond to the Bishops' Appeal for Liberia; support the United Methodist Liberia Annual Conference and pray that peace and rebuilding can be achieved soon. An update on emergency relief efforts is expected from the Rev. Robert Fletcher of the mission board's Africa office when he returns from Liberia in early May.

REFUGEE TOTAL RISES: The number of refugees in the world "bumped up" last year by 1 million to a total of 16 million, while the number of persons internally displaced in their own countries is estimated to be double the number of refugees. These figures were reported to the recent annual conference of national and regional staff members of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES PHOTO BY JOHN GOODWIN

NEW YORK—Officials of the General Board of Global Ministries commission one of 27 new missionaries during the board's spring meeting in New York.

Missions board accepts Soviet invitation

Board-wide evangelism initiative follows unique trip to USSR by top officials

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—In what was called "an historic moment in United Methodist mission efforts," the church's General Board of Global Ministries last week approved a new board-wide mission initiative for work in the Soviet Union.

Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn, board president, and the Rev. Randolph Nugent, general secretary, presented the proposal to the directors and staff by way of a report on their recent trip to the Soviet Union.

Bishop Hearn expressed the immediacy of the proposal, saying, "A window has been opened in the Soviet Union, and the time is right to take such an opportunity."

Specifically asked for UMC

Dr. Nugent added that the nongovernmental Soviet Peace Fund specifically asked for the United Methodist Church to help them with revitalization of the Soviet Union.

"This initiative will take the cooperative efforts of all units of the board, such as Health and Welfare, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Mission Personnel, and Mission Education," Dr. Nugent said.

Initial funding has been approved at $216,000 from the board's program development fund. A special task force will oversee this through the World Division.

Global Ministries officials say the initiative will strengthen work that United Methodists in the Soviet republic of Estonia have established and will re-establish outreach in Latvia and in the Leningrad area.

Leaders of United Methodism's Northern Europe Central Annual Conference and Bishop Hans Vaxby of Helsinki, Finland, strongly recommend that leadership in the program be taken by indigenous United Methodists.

Bishop Hearn and Dr. Nugent visited the Soviet Union for five days in January as the only U.S. religious leaders invited by the Soviet Peace Fund, a quasi-public social service agency.

Their visits included the external affairs office of the Russian Orthodox Church; the governmental commission for distribution of foreign humanitarian aid and the Soviet Peace Fund.

Opening 6 churches a day

"The Soviet government told us they are opening about six churches a day that had been used for "other purposes," said Bishop Hearn.

"For example, we visited one church that had been turned into a bakery. We saw the volunteers arrive to tear out the brick ovens so they could make the area a sanctuary again.

"Father Ivan Economsev, director of external relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, made an unexpected offer to help us establish United Methodist churches in the Soviet Union," the bishop said.

"Moreover, he spoke proudly of assisting the launching of a Korean Methodist congregation in Moscow."

The bishop told Global Ministries directors that a Korean Methodist minister is in the Estonian capital of Tallinn under appointment by United Methodist Bishop C. Dale White (New York Area.)

Russian Orthodox leaders said they would be interested in United Methodist help in theological education, said the bishop.

"With so many churches opening up daily, many ministers have no seminary training," the bishop observed.

In their visit with the Soviet commission on humanitarian aid, the bishop and the general secretary listened to concerns about the lack of food and medicines there. A major discussion involved relief and health-care efforts related to the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster.

"The Soviets responded positively to our suggestions that we have doctors and nurses give their time as volunteers-in-mission to treat the sick from Chernobyl and give training sessions in their specialities and medical skills," said Bishop Hearn.

Africa University breaks ground; first classes will begin in 1992

By TOM McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

HARARE, Zimbabwe—A four-hour ceremony of prayers, music and drama marked the official groundbreaking of United Methodist-related Africa University in Zimbabwe April 6 (see related article below).

Although the first campus buildings cannot be completed until 1993, classes will begin as planned March 23, 1992.

That decision was made in early April by the university's board, pending approval of the school's charter by the Zimbabwe Government.

Three buildings—a residence hall for 80 students; a structure to house classrooms, offices, library, and laboratories; and a kitchen, dining and laundry facility—will be the first constructed on the picturesque site at Old Mutare.

Since construction of the buildings cannot be completed before the university's opening, the 22-member board headed by United Methodist Bishop Emilio de Carvalho of Angola approved interim arrangements to enable the official, on-schedule opening of the colleges of agriculture and theology with a small faculty and student body.

Colleges of management and education will open later.

The board is proposing the renovation of classrooms and a dining hall of three or four existing farm buildings on the 1,500-acre campus, given by the Zimbabwe United Methodist Annual Conference.

President-elect John Kurewa has been instructed to study the availability of interim student housing, probably in Mutare, about 10 miles from the campus.

Approval of the charter is expected soon, according to the Rev. Roger Ireson, general secretary of the Nashville-based Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Until that approval, the church's General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) has said it will not release funds for construction.

The university board will ask finance council governing members May 13-15 in Chicago to authorize additional funds for "planning processes" required to open the university in April.

The additional funds are to be used to complete architectural drawings, employ a dean of the College of Agriculture (the Rev. Yemba Kekumba of Zaire was earlier named dean-elect of the College of Theology), and employ a registrar, librarian and plant director.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY TOM McANALLY

HARARE, Zimbabwe—Four United Methodist bishops help break ground for the church's first university on the continent of Africa. Participating in the April 6 ceremony were (from left) Bishops Felton E. May (Harrisburg Area), Ben R. Oliphint (Houston Area), Abel T. Muzorewa (Zimbabwe), and Emilio de Carvalho (Angola).

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Africa University 4-hour ceremony draws thousands

By TOM McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

MUTARE, Zimbabwe—More than 3,000 people came to a picturesque valley in the highlands of eastern Zimbabwe April 6 to witness the breaking of ground for Africa's first United Methodist-related university.

Gathered on the sloping hillside where the university will be built, participants looked down at a brush arbor sheltering speakers and honored guests from the sun.

A four-hour ceremony

Throughout the four-hour ceremony, people sat or stood in the grass, some sheltered from the bright sun by umbrellas, trees and cloth-draped bushes.

Guests included members of the Zimbabwean Parliament and other government officials, representatives from the Japanese and U.S. embassies and United Methodist bishops.

Church agency executives, members of the university's board, officials from other religious organizations and the region's Shona chief also attended.

Hosting the visiting dignitaries were United Methodists of the Zimbabwe Annual Conference, which has contributed 1,500 acres for the university at the Old Mutare Mission center.

Mission seen across the valley

One can see the United Methodist mission across the valley from the campus site. It includes Hartzell elementary and secondary school and a hospital at the foot of Chiremba Mountain.

The mountain is often referred to by United Methodists as Hartzell Mountain, from which the late Bishop Joseph Crane Hartzell had a vision in the late 1800s about a future gathering of students from many lands.

In early 1898, Bishop Hartzell acquired the land at Old Mutare, given to British administrator Cecil Rhodes by Shona chief Mutasa, in an agreement with the British government. Missionaries began to arrive later that year.

More than 100 years later, the ground-breaking event was attended by many Zimbabweans who traveled hours by public transportation and on foot.

Members of the United Methodist Women's organization stood out among the crowd in their traditional blue and red uniforms, frequently clapping and howling their enthusiastic response by ululating in high-pitched voices.

Music was provided by a chorus of United Methodist men with blue sashes across their chests and by several colorfully robed church choirs. Accompaniment included drums and rattles.

Young people served as ushers, and mission school students presented short dramas, readings and music.

Behind a large enclosure fenced with tall grass, food was prepared over open fires. Men with long poles stirred 50-gallon metal drums of boiling sadza, a thick cornmeal porridge served with meat and gravy.

A tree is planted

The service included music, prayers, addresses by Zimbabwe's minister of education and chairman of the university's board of directors, and the planting of an acacia tree, symbol of the new university.

Saying Zimbabwe is proud to host the new university, Minister of Education David I.G. Karimanzira applauded the church for its "illustrious educational record" in Zimbabwe. He said the mission at Old Mutare runs "one of the best secondary schools in the country."

Pointing to the nation's colonialist past, when the vast majority of blacks were denied access to education, Mr. Karimanzira said church-sponsored educational institutions played a critical role in developing leaders for the new Zimbabwe.

He paid tribute to the United Methodist Church "for the trust and confidence it has shown in Zimbabwe by choosing it to host this educational venture.

"May the same spirit of cooperation between the people of Zimbabwe and the United Methodist Church continue to prevail," he said.

Bishop proposed university

United Methodist Bishop Emilio de Carvalho of Angola was one who in 1984 first proposed a United Methodist university in Africa.

As chairman of the university's board of directors, Bishop De Carvalho said that for the first time in its 206-year-history, the church will provide the African people with a quality institution of higher learning, "thus helping our continent and its peoples to get rid of the tragedy of illiteracy and underdevelopment."

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY TOM McANALLY

HARARE, Zimbabwe—Participants in the April 6 Africa University groundbreaking look from the campus site across the valley to Chiremba Mountain. It was from that mountain that Bishop Joseph Crane Hartzell more than 100 years ago had a vision of young people from across Africa gathering below.

Faith connections

CANDLER DEAN NAMED: The Rev. R. Kevin LaGree, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Topeka, Kan., will become dean of UM-related Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta on July 1. The new Candler dean has been an adjunct faculty member at UM-related St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo., where he received his master of divinity degree in 1980. He also holds a degree from Harvard Law School and briefly practiced law before entering the ordained ministry. He is the first local-church pastor named to the Candler post in recent years. Dr. LaGree succeeds the Rev. James L. Waits, who will become executive director of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

NEW UMW TREASURER: The General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division has elected Connie J. Takimine of Denver treasurer. She succeeds Joyce Sohl, the division's new chief executive. As president of the Western Jurisdiction core planning group of United Methodist Women, Ms. Takimine is a director of the Global Ministries board, serving on the Women's and National Divisions. She is president of Red Mountain Associates of Denver, a planning and accounting firm. Before that, Ms. Takimine was assistant general secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Pensions.

Connie Takimine

MISSION PERSONNEL EXEC: The Rev. John Leonard McCullough, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Springfield, Mass., is the new associate general secretary for the General Board of Global Ministries Mission Personnel Resource Department. He will be responsible for world and national missionaries for United Methodism's official mission board. He replaces Sheila Fleming, who left that position last August. Betty Gordon has served as interim head since January. Mr. McCullough served as a missionary with the Methodist Church in Kenya from 1981 to 1984.

John McCullough

MERGERS CONSIDERED: United Methodist annual conferences in Tennessee and Illinois will consider merger plans at their 1991 conference sessions. Anticipating mergers are Memphis and Tennessee conferences and Central Illinois and Southern Illinois conferences.

Compiled from news and staff reports

UMs are urged to help Kurdish refugees

Relief agency plans special appeal to local congregations for immediate aid donations

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—The plight of Kurdish refugees in Northern Iraq has moved directors of United Methodism's relief agency to seek more funds to address the continuing crisis in the Middle East.

United Methodist Committee on Relief directors during their spring meeting April 14-18 approved $20,000 for an immediate church-wide mailing to all UM ministers urging quick response to the Kurdish crisis.

They also approved an additional $25,000 to produce television spot announcements promoting donations to UMCOR emergency relief efforts.

It was recommended that the video promotions be of a general nature and available for use in connection with a variety of emergency needs.

The one-page letter to ministers from the Rev. R. Bruce Weaver, interim chief executive of UMCOR, noted the tragedy of "hundreds of thousands of displaced Kurds massed along the Iran/Turkish/Iraq borders" who are "desperate for food, medicines and other necessities."

"It is imperative that United Methodists respond to this human tragedy," Dr. Weaver stated in the letter (see related editorial on page 2).

Dr. Weaver told UMCOR directors that United Methodists from all over the United States "have been calling our office and asking what UMCOR is doing in response to the Kurdish situation."

According to staff member Lloyd Rollins, UMCOR has sent some $80,000 to the Persian Gulf region since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August.

Mr. Rollins said the funds have helped pay for food, tents, medical supplies and transportation for those supplies for displaced people throughout the Middle East.

He said that the funds reached the Middle East through ecumenical channels, going first to Church World Service, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., then to the Middle East Council of Churches, which is coordinating church-based relief efforts in the region.

Since a special appeal was first made public in January for Persian Gulf relief, United Methodists have contributed more than $10,000 to Advance No. 601740-2, according to Lydia Chao, UMCOR financial coordinator.

In other action, UMCOR directors approved release of:

✓ $3,142,306 to refugee, relief and development programs from funds received through the Advance;

✓ An additional $1,045,517 for special grants and emergency funds, including $259,848 for a program to alleviate hunger in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Women's Division head cites mission education as goal

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—The new chief executive of United Methodist Women wants to challenge women in your local church to become educated for mission.

In her first address as deputy general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division, Joyce Sohl said, "My vision of the division includes a renewed emphasis on education for mission.

"Education for mission is not education about mission but education that leads the membership to active participation in mission."

Mrs. Sohl said an annual conference United Methodist Women president had written asking for suggestions for programs to use with teen circles.

The new deputy general secretary said she expects to address this problem early in the next quadrennium with a new membership program for teens and young adults.

Her vision for the division also includes being advocates and activists, becoming a multicultural community and becoming "better witnesses to the risen Lord in our world."

In business sessions, Women's Division directors:

* Recommended that appropriations from the division during 1992 be $20.5 million, subject to approval of recipient divisions during their meetings in October. The total includes $5.3 million each for World and National Divisions of the Global Ministries board.

* Changed the United Methodist Women's reading program from three plans to four, beginning in 1992.

Starting next year, a participant would enroll in one of four plans for credit through the conference UMW.

Plan one requires reading four books; plan two, 10; plan three, 15, and plan four, 20. All four plans also require readings in both "Response" and "New World Outlook" magazines published by the Global Ministries board.

* Approved the three 1993 mission study theme topics: The Book of Matthew, for the spiritual growth study; the Caribbean, for the geographic study; and the Global Economy for the general issue study.

* Approved 54 domestic grants and 55 international grants from the 1990 "Call to Prayer and Self Denial Fund." Net receipts from that offering totaled $1,070,649.11.

Three additional projects were also approved from a prior (1988) emphasis on "The Older Woman: A Resource for Mission," totaling $24,500.

* Approved sources of funds to cover a deficit of $90,455.95 related to the Women's Division 1990 Assembly.

GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES PHOTO BY JOHN C. GOODWIN

NEW YORK—The torch of women's leadership in The United Methodist Church is passed as Joyce Sohl (left) succeeds outgoing executive Theressa Hoover (right). Ms. Sohl was installed as deputy general secretary of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries at the board's meeting last week.

During the treasurer's report, the division learned that income to the Women's Division in 1990 was $32,331,771. This compares with $39,697,001 in 1989.

Stephen F. Brimigion, acting treasurer for the women's unit, said, "This decrease is mostly from our not being able to repeat a net sale of securities in 1990 at the same level in 1989."

Supplementary designated gifts came in at $2,118,513, compared with $2,164,824 in 1989, he said.

The 1990 Assembly offering, received in Kansas City last May, totaled $277,590.84. That offering went for 27 projects under the theme "Witnessing for Children and Youth in a New World."

Total expenses for the Women's Division in 1990 were $36,489,134.

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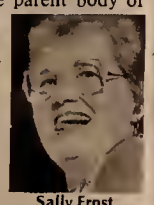
CHOIR CLINIC

UM women target racism, police brutality

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—Being an "advocate for the oppressed and dispossessed with special attention to the needs of women and children," the General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division has approved advocacy campaigns protesting police brutality and poor wages and working conditions for factory workers.

During their spring meeting April 11-13 and 18, the parent body of the 1.2 million-member United Methodist Women expressed outrage concerning the beating and handcuffing of a black man by Los Angeles Police.



Sally Ernst

"The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that the mistreatment or torture of persons for any purpose violates Christian teachings and must be condemned by Christians and churches wherever and whenever they occur," said a resolution from the division's Christian Social Relations committee.

"Therefore, we recommend that the Women's Division:

■ "Send a letter to the president of the Los Angeles California City Council asking for the dismissal of Chief of Police Daryl Gates and for the reversal of the policies and practices contributing to the use of excessive force.

■ "Request the California-Pacific Conference United Methodist Women to consider taking similar action.

■ "Request that Congress hold hearings on police brutality across the country.

■ "Contact each governor in the U.S. and request the appointment of a state task force to investigate police brutality.

■ "Develop resources that can be used to inform and alert United Methodist Women of the growing danger of police brutality so they can act as monitors or join with other organizations monitoring police brutality in their communities."

In other action, Women's Divison directors voted to support a letter-writing campaign to eliminate sweatshops. Annual conference UMW officers will be asked to generate letters to retailers, manufacturers, and product endorsers.

Women's Divison president Sally Ernst of Bethel Park, Pa., said the campaign is being organized by the grassroots group, La Mujer Obrera of El Paso, Texas. That organization seeks to improve conditions for women in the garment industry.

On a related note, the division voted to join the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras, a project of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility.

"Maquiladora" is a term commonly applied to assembly and manufacturing plants established in Mexico by foreign corporations. The coalition hopes to encourage these companies to agree to certain standards of conduct for the rights of assembly workers.

In her president's report, Mrs. Ernst reminded elected directors and staff that United Methodist Women are called to "address the racism that exists within the church and within society" through the United Methodist Charter for Racial Justice.

The opening statement of that document says:

"The fruits of racism are prejudice, bigotry, discrimination and dehumanization. Consistently, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders have been humiliated by being given inferior jobs, housing, education, medical services, transportation, and public accommodations."

Mrs. Ernst added, "We can add to that list the exploitation of persons for cheap labor."

Woman elected history director

United Methodist News Service

Susan M. Eltscher of Madison, N.J., has been elected assistant general secretary of the United Methodist Commission on Archives and History.

Ms. Eltscher, director of Women's and Ethnic History for the commission since 1987, will assume new duties June 1. She succeeds the Rev. Arthur Swarthout, who returned to a congregation in Nebraska.

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The Resident First...Because I Care
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Small town helps the homeless

Empty building converted to house, educate homeless families

By JIM B. SCHICK

LIND, Wash.—In the little town of Lind, they don't sit around waiting for the government to solve the problems of the nation.

The town, located in the center of a wheat growing area, has 500 people, a heart of gold, some empty buildings and C. Floyd Emerson, pastor of Lind's Zion Congregational United Church of Christ.

As in many small rural towns, empty buildings in the business district may be a sign of economic hard times.

Mr. Emerson and Lind, however, hope to make good use of them.

Help for the homeless

Calling itself the Empire House, the group headed by Mr. Emerson is remodeling most of a large empty building in downtown Lind into a facility to help the homeless and jobless re-establish themselves.

It started, Mr. Emerson said, when he saw a television series on the homeless.

"I kept thinking why do those kids have to be homeless when we have an empty building?

"But the same question kept getting in the way. Why bring anyone to Lind where there are no jobs and no way to break out of the circle of poverty?"

Then other organizations came into the picture including the Lind school district and Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake.

So a program of self-help and education was formulated for the homeless, especially, but not limited to, families with children interested in putting forth an effort to help themselves out of poverty.

"We have the resource," Mr. Emerson said. "It's sort of a survival thing in small towns; you find a need and provide for it and people who want it will come for it."

The building was donated by its former owner to an organization of the Church of Christ, so obtaining the building was no problem.

Residence in Empire House will be temporary. Once they progress to a certain point, participants will be expected to move to make room for others in need.

The program will provide assistance in relocating and job hunting, Mr. Emerson said.

"This is not a place to warehouse somebody," he said. "It is a place where somebody can learn and grow."

Adults are educated, too

"Since this is primarily an educational program, participants will be expected to achieve certain goals or they would be asked to leave the program."

Adults admitted to the program will be required to take some sort of courses—vocational, family finance and budgeting, remodeling, reading and math, or basic job skills.

Children of school age will be required to attend Lind schools.

Volunteers are working on the building, and the allotted space is taken with the first group of children, men and women.

"Now we pray and hope for the best," Mr. Emerson said.

Mr. Schick is a free-lance writer in Walla Walla, Wash.

PHOTO BY JIM B. SCHICK

LIND, Wash.—Two boys, both members of homless families staying at Empire House, attend school in the recently completed classroom. The Empire House project combines resources of churches and community to help house and educate homeless children and their parents.

Anti-corruption campaign spearheaded by bishops

By JOE GOLDMAN
Religious News Service

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—This country's Roman Catholic bishops are spearheading a campaign against widespread corruption that has produced a wave of scandals chronicled over months in leading newspapers and involving high level government officials and other society notables.

In a document released in March, the bishops issued a scathing criticism of the "institutional corruption" that seems to be infecting the fabric of Argentine society.

Corruption reaches all levels

Archbishop Antonio Quarracino, head of the Argentine Bishops Conference, released the document that said that "corruption reaches all strata of the society, not just political leaders in power, but also to the business world, union leaders, all the way up to sports personalities."

At a press conference, the archbishop said, "Corruption is synonymous with the dissolving and corroding of the country's institutions."

The stories have ranged from charges of drug trafficking by government figures to improper gifts from foreign businessmen to President Carlos Menem and public admissions by a top government employee that he got his job by stealing.

The same official, who eventually was forced to resign, joked on a radio show that one would have to be stupid to work at an honest job in Argentina.

Judge arrested in stolen car

In one incident that seems to exemplify the degree of corruption and official misbehavior in the country, a judge selected by President Menem to head a panel looking into corruption was arrested on the way to his swearing-in ceremony when police noticed that he was driving a stolen car.

The church has asked public officials, union leaders, entertainment and sports personalities and common citizens to examine their lifestyles, claiming that people have lost the kind of values that help stem corruption.

Initial reaction to the anti-corruption crusade was mostly negative.

Raul Amin, a union leader and one of the top labor officials in the country, said the church should not "cast the first stone."

He added, "We share the worries of Monsignor Quarracino, but we think that so generalized a charge, above all coming from the church, cannot or should not be pronounced in such an ambiguous style unless there are concrete proofs.

"Sadly, that which Monsignor Quarracino didn't say is that this president (Menem) has had the courage to fight against corruption."

The Air Force chief, Brig. Gen. Jose Julia, also took the opportunity to criticize the monsignor while defending his commander-in-chief.

President can't be blamed?

"One can't demand the president be responsible for everything," said the general.

In reference to responsibility for corruption, General Julia used the case of the celebrated Vatican scandal involving the Banco Ambrosiano, affirming that "nobody cast blame on the pope" during that incident.

With the weight of increasing criticism, Archbishop Raul Primatesta of Cordoba softened the position of the bishops.

"The church's document on corruption is also directed to bishops and pastoral leaders within the church. We don't exclude ourselves from the corruption charges," he said in an interview.

Proposed Hispanic plan emphasizes lay ministers

United Methodist News Service

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—A national plan to foster United Methodist congregational development and community services among Hispanics was adopted in principle in San Antonio recently.

Creation of a new category of 2,000 trained lay ministers working in conjunction with clergy to develop new faith communities is the genius of the proposal, according to several guests and members at the recent meeting of the Committee to Develop a National Plan for Hispanic Ministries.

The plan calls for the national office to administer a National Hispanic Challenge Fund which would support the development of congregational and community ministries to Hispanics in the United States and Puerto Rico.

United Methodist Bishop Elias G. Galvan of Phoenix, Ariz., chairperson of the 32-member committee, expressed excitement about the lay ministry emphasis.

"It's an attempt to call our church to ministry with the poor. ... We are trying to call the church to a new reality."

The committee is planning to recommend that the church's policy-making 1922 General Conference authorize creation of a national committee to coordinate, implement and evaluate the ministry plan as well as a national Hispanic office with at least one fulltime staff person.

The role of eacb of the church's four churchwide program agencies in implementing the national plan is outlined in the document.

Review

What do ancient fossils prove? TV show takes a looks at creation and evolution

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

For most of us, it has been quite a while since we studied geology in high school or college—if we even had a chance to do so back then.

Thus, the ongoing debate about whether fossils prove the theories of evolution or the biblical account of creation are confusing to many Christians, since we often are not certain exactly what a fossil is anyway.

"Lost Worlds, Vanished Lives" is a rare opportunity to learn more about fossils and the distant past of planet Earth and to reach our own conclusions about evolution and creation.

Show hosted by naturalist

It is written and hosted by Sir David Attenborough, who is both one of the world's foremost naturalists and a superb science teacher.

"Lost Worlds, Vanished Lives" makes excellent use of models, animation, and computer-generated graphics, as well as footage of modern creatures, to show us how parts of ancient plants and animals are preserved in fossils and how scientists use fossils to reconstruct how these creatures may have lived.

He roams the continents, scaling steep hillsides in Wales, paddling through American swamps and trekking across the Sahara.

Sir Attenborough introduces us to a stunning array of fossils, from petrified forests to a swimming reptile captured in stone at the moment of giving birth.

If the idea of reptiles giving birth to live offspring violates what you learned about their always laying eggs, there are other surprises in store for you.

Scientists now have evidence that some flying reptiles were covered with fur, like mammals, while others had bird-like feathers.

You may have been taught that dinosaurs were lumbering, cold-blooded lizards, but it now is clear that some were almost certainly warm-blooded, fast and agile.

'Divine assistance required'

Sir Attenborough, like most scientists, assumes that evolution has occurred, but he does not argue one way or the other whether it happened with or without God's guidance.

Indeed, watching aerodynamic experts from the Smithsonian attempting to build a flying model of a pterosaur found in Texas may convince you that reptiles could never have evolved in this way without divine assistance.

Sir Attenborough amuses us with our great-grandparents' attempts to explain peculiar fossils—such as the stone spiral found in Arkansas which locals claimed was "the Devil's corkscrew."

Fossil hunters proved that this formation actually was the work of a beaver-like mammal by excavating its burrow and finding its bones.

"Lost Worlds, Vanished Lives" reminds us, though, that the best scientists also make bad guesses and that evolutionary theory is not immutable truth.

In the face of new evidence, scientists regularly reject earlier explanations of how an animal looked, moved or ate.

"Lost Worlds, Vanished Lives" premieres at 8 p.m. EST, Sunday, April 28 and repeats at 11:15 p.m. April 29.

People of faith should find it entertaining, informative and thought-provoking.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

Dear Deborah

Pastor is 'run ragged' by church, says mom

Dear Deborah:

What is happening to the pastors in our denomination?

My son, a pastor for 20 years, is just run ragged in a new church he has served for a year.

Recently he told us it would be better if we drove down to see him to come on a Saturday as that was the day he has the fewest commitments. He said he had almost no free time to spend with us on Sunday.

Of course we enjoy seeing the rest of the family, too, but we are concerned about our son. He is tired all the time, and his wife says he is more difficult to live with.

Is it right for a church to demand so much from a pastor?

Pastor's Mom and Dad

Dear Pastor's Mom and Dad:

You have described one of the major challenges to the church in the coming years.

We do not have a clear job description for pastors so that neither the pastor nor the congregation is clear about, and agrees upon, what is reasonable to expect from a pastor.

In most congregations there are several generations which each carry the expectations of their time. Pastors, too, carry their own expectations for themselves based on vision and/or experience.

These seldom get talked about and almost never are set alongside the strengths and interests of a particular pastor and the needs of a particular congregation.

This is a real challenge to almost every alive church today. It needs to be addressed both in the hierarchy and in the local congregations. But it has to be done in an atmosphere of respect and listening to one another.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Poem of the Week

a year of praise
in memory of john wesley
fire
alpha and omega
that warmed so strangely
a heart into music
so solemn an entrance
to name our dignity
beloved memory
everything now sings
everything is fire
trembles
like spring
forever young

—LOU ELLA HICKMAN

History of Hymns

'Mighty fortress' is 'greatest hymn of Martin Luther'

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and pow'r are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Martin Luther was a disappointment to his father, Hans Luther, who had expected that his son would be a lawyer.

He was quite upset when Martin, at age 22, entered a monastery, never dreaming that his son would one day be far better known than any lawyer in Germany.

Ordained a priest in 1507, Martin Luther began teaching at the University of Wittenberg. Ten years later it was there that he posted his now famous theses against papal abuses.

Two years later he denied the pope's supremacy, an action that resulted in papal condemnation of Luther and his writings.

Luther wrote hymns, composed tunes, and adapted tunes from secular sources without apology. He believed that music was a gift from God and should be used in doing the work of God.

His greatest hymn is *"Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,"* written in 1529.

The English translation found in our hymnals was made by a New England Unitarian minister, Frederick H. Hedge. It begins "A mighty fortress is our God."

The hymn, based on Psalm 46, was written during a conflict in Luther's struggle against the Roman Catholic Church. It was his confident expression of victory in that crisis.

The hymn has been called "the greatest hymn of the greatest man of the greatest period of German history."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"God Will Take Care of You"

'Brits must go,' says Irish priest

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—Father Des Wilson takes a liberation theologian's slant on things in Northern Ireland, a position that has placed him at odds with both civil and church authorities.

"There's a guerrilla war going on, and the churches have taken the side of the government," said the 65-year-old priest during a recent interview in New York.

"I have made no secret of the fact that I believe that the British government has no function in Ireland except to go, but it must go in an orderly fashion."

Mr. Wilson has found powerful allies in the church in the United States.

New York's Cardinal John O'Connor lent credibility to Father Wilson's point of view when the archbishop invited the priest to join in celebrating Mass on St. Patrick's Day.

The priest was in New York in late March and early April for benefits organized by U.S. supporters to raise funds for Conway Mill, a community development project Mr. Wilson founded in the Lower Falls, a mostly working class Catholic area of West Belfast where unemployment runs 60 to 80 percent.

Mr. Wilson can be contrary. A practical pacifist, he refuses to condemn the IRA and berates Irish bishops for doing so.

He said the bishops refuse to talk to "the elected representatives" of their people, who may be a bit too republican for their sensibilities.

Refusing to condemn the IRA, Mr. Wilson emphasized, did not mean he approved of particular strategies or actions.

Legislative Liaison Committee Louisiana Annual Conference Of The United Methodist Church

Legislative Liaison Committee States Three Major Areas of Concern for the 1991 Legislative Session:

1. COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH CARE

A. Position of the General Conference, United Methodist Church

1. Social Principles #72, C "Rights of Children" 1988 Discipline: " . . . children have rights to food, shelter, clothing, health care and emotional well-being . . ."
2. Book of Resolutions, "Health Care Delivery Policy Statement" p. 246: " . . . we call upon United Methodists in their local churches, districts and annual conferences, in organization and agencies to work to enlarge the health care service choices available to people everywhere by supporting: . . . community health programs which assess health needs and provide preventive, primary, and home care services."

B. Background:

Community-based health care (or Community Health Centers) provide routine and preventative medical services such as checkups, monitoring chronic diseases, pre-natal and well-baby care, preventative dental services and treatment for minor injuries and emergencies. Typical providers of such services are family physicians, nurse-practitioners, general internists and the like. Services are provided in a clinic setting. Clinics are controlled by people in the community (recipients of clinic services traditionally make up at least half of the board of directors.)

Services are made available on a sliding fee scale and no one is turned away. These services are primarily (though not exclusively) made use of by the uninsured, low-income or working poor, or those who simply have no access to a source for routine medical care. To date there are eight such federally-funded clinics in Louisiana.

C. Legislative Objective

For state monies to be made available for new community-based clinics or for the expansion of existing centers.

2. EXPANSION OF MEDICAID ACCESS

A. Position of General Conference, United Methodist Church

1. Book of Resolutions "Health and Wholeness" pp. 235 ff. "We support the following principles of access to health services:

In a just society all people are entitled to basic maintenance and health care services. We reject as contrary to our understanding of the gospel the notion of differing standards of health care for various segments of the population.

Health care should be comprehensive, including preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative services.

In areas where medical services are not available, or are in undersupply, we urge private or public funding to provide the full range of needed services"

2. Book of Resolutions "Health Care Delivery Policy Statement" p. 241 ff.

". . . The United Methodist Church urges that medical and health care services of good quality should be made available to all persons and should be so organized as to be readily accessible to all . . .

. . . We affirm the following principles and goals as necessary for effective and responsible delivery of health and services:

All people should be entitled to basic package of preventive and health care services.

New emphasis should be put on preventive care for all ages.

3. Book of Resolutions "Responsible Parenthood" p. 111

"We therefore encourage our churches and common society to: Provide to each pregnant woman accessibility to comprehensive health care and nutrition adequate to assure healthy children."

B. Background

Early, high quality, comprehensive prenatal care is the most effective means for reducing the state's high rate of infant mortality. Access to prenatal care for all pregnant women has not been achieved in Louisiana. Especially vulnerable are those poor women not covered by Medicaid or employer-provided insurance coverage. The goal of this legislation will be to ensure that all pregnant women and infants, regardless of their economic status, geographic location or ethnic background, have access to appropriate health care services.

C. Legislative Objectives

1. Expand eligibility for Medicaid services for all infants and pregnant women with an income up to 185% of the federal poverty income guidelines.
2. Extend eligibility for Medicaid services to children born after September 30, 1983, who are at least six and not yet nineteen, and whose family incomes are below 100% of federal poverty income guidelines.
3. Base eligibility for Medicaid services for pregnant adolescents on the income of the pregnant adolescent and not on the income of her parents.

3. FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

A. Position of the General Conference, United Methodist Church

1. Social principles #71 F: Discipline "We recognize the continuing need for full, positive, and factual sex education opportunities for children, youth and adults."
2. Book of Resolutions, "Responsible Parenthood" p. 111 "We therefore encourage our churches and common society to:

Provide to all education on human sexuality and family life in its varying forms, including means of marriage enrichment, rights of children, responsible and joyful expression of sexuality, and changing attitudes toward male and female roles in home and market place."

3. Book of Resolutions, "AIDS and the Healing ministry of the Church" pp. 103, 104:

"As a church we call upon our general agencies, annual conferences and members to: Support AIDS prevention education in church and society that provides both the information and motivation required for persons to change their behavior so as to reduce or eliminate the risk of infection."

B. Background

Louisiana has one of the highest adolescence pregnancy rates in the nation. AIDS continues to pose a threat to the life and well being of an ever increasing number.

C. LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

Grant permission to local parish school boards to use comprehensive, appropriate family life education curriculum for grades K-12, including education on AIDS and other sexually transmitted disease.

Education Vouchers:

This fifteen-minute video tape, produced in 1990, raises critical questions about the proposed education voucher system. The discussion guide helps open the issue of funding of public and private education, church and state issues, and racial re-segregation. Copies of the video are available from the Conference Audio-video library and the office of each District Superintendent.

Purpose Statement

Legislative Liaison Committee Louisiana Annual Conference Of The United Methodist Church

PURPOSE

The Purpose of the Legislative Liaison Committee shall be to bear faithful witness to the Christian concerns of the United Methodist Church and the Louisiana Annual Conference as they impact the issues faced by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana.

DUTIES

— **study** the positions of the United Methodist Church on social issues as written in the **Book of Discipline**, the **Social Principles** and the **Book of Resolutions** passed by General Conference and on any such positions taken by the Louisiana Annual Conference

— **inform** the Annual Conference (members, local churches and agencies) of the positions of the United Methodist Church on issues of social importance as they relate to current concerns within the life of the State of Louisiana and the Annual Conference

— **assist** the Annual Conference, the Bishop and Cabinet, and other Conference agencies in developing relationships between Louisiana legislators and state officials and the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in order to provide opportunity to relate the concerns of the Church on social issues

— **monitor** legislative activity of particular concern to United Methodists and inform the church, its appropriate agencies, and its people, of the significant legislative issues confronting the Christian community and the people of Louisiana

— **seek to involve** clergy and laity in addressing these issues, channeling the faith and expertise of concerned individuals and agencies toward a faithful witness and a constructive resolution of the issues

— **communicate** the position of the United Methodist Church and the Louisiana Annual Conference to the Legislature, facilitate the witness of others, and when appropriate, encourage the initiation of legislation designed to effect positive social change in response to the gospel of Jesus Christ

Impact Briefing: A Legislative Forum

May 29, 1991
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Theme:
HEALTH CARE CRISIS

PROGRAM

8 a.m. Registration and Breakfast
Focus on the Issues, 1991 Louisiana Legislative Session at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, 412 North Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

11 a.m. Lobbying Skills
Lunch at the State Capitol
Visit House and Senate Committee and Representatives and Senators

Registration Fee: $6.00 — includes cost of noon lunch at the Capitol

Send check to: IMPACT BRIEFING
Mrs. Beverly Pierce
3175 Scenic Highway
Baton Rouge, LA 70805

Sponsors include: Legislative Liaison Committee, Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
Louisiana Conference Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church
Louisiana CrossLines, United Methodist Church
Presbytery of South Louisiana
Voice of Louisiana (Roman Catholic Church)
Louisiana Interfaith Impact
Louisiana Health Coalition

OUR VIEWS

Basic education is the chief need

A recent poll of executives at major U.S. companies has turned up a worrisome, albeit not surprising, attitude of business leaders toward high school education in the U.S.

The poll indicates that 64 percent of the respondents are not happy with the reading, writing and reasoning abilities of high school graduates entering the work force.

Pollsters surveyed officers who are either directly or indirectly responsible for the recruitment of workers at the 1,200 largest U.S. corporations.

The people of Louisiana have had the same worries about our educational process for some time. Those feelings contributed to the decision by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to toughen requirements for obtaining a high school diploma.

As things now stand, students must pass 23 units to graduate, including four units of English, three each of math and science and a half-unit of computer literacy. We believe these requirements are a step in the direction of adequately preparing all students — including those who do not plan to attend college.

The survey was conducted by the National Alliance of Business. William Kolberg, the president of the Alliance, said the results should be of concern for everyone — parents, employers and the students themselves.

"We are on a collision course with the reality that America is developing a second-class work force whose best feature in the future will be low pay," Kolberg said. "Low skill means low pay."

Kolberg said about 82 million U.S. jobs don't require a college education. But he warned that unless the U.S. develops new attitudes and approaches for educating those who do not plan to attend college, filling those jobs in the future may prove impossible.

At a minimum, he said, workers should be able to read above a seventh-grade level and to compute math problems at higher than a fifth-grade level. Companies now have to interview seven or eight applicants just to find one who is qualified, Kolberg said.

Kolberg is not talking about increasing trade school training. Business wants workers with a solid grounding in basic education. Workers like that can be much more easily trained by business.

If our children are provided with a sound basic education, not only will they be able to absorb whatever training is necessary for their chosen fields, but they will have a greater flexibility in choosing that field.

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LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Who We Are and What We Do Speak Louder Than What We Say!

Matthew records an intriguing parable of Jesus. It's found in Matthew 21:28-32 and concerns two sons; one who said yes and didn't, and one who said no and did.

The implications are far-reaching for Christians seeking to live out the gospel in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Speed Lea of the Alban Institute talks about explicit theology (our formal creeds) and our implicit theology (how we really live). He says that religion becomes unhealthy when our creeds become unrelated to our practice.

Jesus' parable makes clear that it's our being and doing that are significant in God's eye — not only our saying.

Courage in the midst of adversity may mean affirming honest doubt and living a life of hope even when God seems far removed from our world.

Sometimes an authentic no can be a faithful yes!

William B. Oden

Dr. Nancy Carruth a Leader in Fund Drive for Africa University

Dr. Nancy Carruth

Dr. Nancy Carruth, a native of Bunkie, Louisiana, is one of 23 United Methodists selected from the world-wide Church to lead a campaign to raise ten million dollars for the permanent endowment fund for the new African University.

Dr. Carruth, known widely for her strong, dedicated leadership in Louisiana United Methodism, has been a pioneer in getting this challenge before the larger Church. In 1984, while serving as president of the Division of Higher Education for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, she received a proposal from Bishop Emilio J. M. de Carvalho of Angola and Bishop Arthur Kulah of Liberia for the establishment of a Methodist University in Africa.

The proposal was discussed further at the Assembly of the World Council of Methodism which met in Kenya in 1986. In 1987, a site team composed of Drs. Samuel DuBois Cook, David Ruffin and Jim Laney, all presidents of Methodist-related colleges, selected Zimbabwe for the location of the university. Dr. Caruth led the Higher Education Legislative Committee that presented the plan to General Conference in 1988. An overwhelming majority of the delegates approved the project and voted to raise the 20 million dollars needed. Ten million dollars is to be raised through apportioned gifts to Africa University Fund and ten million dollars is to be raised from contributions to the World Service Special Gifts (# 03-01-88). Dr. Carruth will be working through the World Service Special Gifts avenue of fund raising.

Dr. Carruth agreed to take on this major responsibility because she "sees such a great need" for the school. She points out that only 300 students are able to go on to college out of the 5000 people who graduate from high school each year in Zimbabwe. There is a "crying need for universities throughout Africa," she says, so that African citizens may have the opportunity to train in the nations they will later serve.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the construction of the first buildings on the campus of Africa University were held on April 6. The site is on an old mission begun in the 1890s through the work of Bishop Joseph Hartzell and his wife, Jeanne, who were two of the church's great missionaries. Although the buildings will not be completed until 1993, classes are scheduled to begin in March 1992.

Bishop's Reception At State Capitol Attracts Louisiana Legislators

"Is there anyone here from my district?" was a frequent question asked by legislators at the Bishop's Reception for the Legislature held on the opening day of the Legislative Session, April 15 at the Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge. Fortunately the answer was usually, "yes," as the room filled up with clergy, laity and legislators and their wives that morning.

This fourth annual event, sponsored by the Conference Legislative Liaison Committee, attracted nearly fifty lawmakers for coffee and conversation. Fred Loy, an active United Methodist layman who is one of the organizers of the reception, reported that nearly half of Louisiana's state senators were present. "Every year it becomes more successful," according to Mr. Loy. "The feedback I get from the legislature is positive. The 12-15 United Methodist legislators like to meet with their Bishop and the other members of the legislature appreciate our efforts as well."

The Bishop's Reception for Legislators began four years ago under the direction of Bishop Walter Underwood and Legislative Liaison Committee Chairperson, Dr. J. Philip Woodland. Its purpose was to help the committee become better acquainted with Louisiana's lawmakers as well as to let the legislators know and understand the work of the Louisiana United Methodist Church in matters of mutual concern.

Each year personal invitations to the Reception are sent to the 144 members of the legislature. These invitations are followed by calls to invited members from constituents of the various districts they represent. Mr. Loy also places reminder notices on the debts of legislators the morning of the Reception. Committee member Jo Wood Berry, a professional lobbyist, encourages legislators to attend as well.

The event is open to all interested United Methodists. Mr. Loy feels that the Reception provides "a United Methodist presence in the legislature that was not there before." He and many others take pride in the knowledge that the spiritual voice of the Church is heard in an area that effects so many peoples' lives.

Bishop Oden is shown talking to State Representative Timothy Stine from Lake Charles.

Pictured with Bishop Oden (right), are State Representative Jimmy D. Long, Chairman of the House Committee on Education, from Natchitoches and Fred Loy, an active United Methodist Layman.

Around the Conference

First UMC, Logansport, recently enjoyed a "Key to Joy" weekend. Jack Dew from the Monroe District conducted the event which had 20 lay participants. The weekend was a time of renewal, fellowship and fun. Other congregations are encouraged to participate in this experience.

Using dramatic music and lighting to enhance his art, Dr. Samuel Gore, Chairman of the Mississippi College Art Department in Clinton, Mississippi, sculpted the head of Christ with a crown of thorns from a mass of clay for members of Nolley Memorial UMC in Jena. The event was sponsored by the UMW, with all proceeds to benefit further UMW mission projects. Approximately 200 people were on hand for the program. The Rev. Paul C. Carroll Sr. is pastor.

Banquet to Honor Dr. J. J. Caraway

During the Louisiana Annual Conference session to be held June 3 through 6, Dr. James J. Caraway will complete 44 years of distinguished service to United Methodism. For the last 12 years, he has led the Conference as Executive Director of Administration/Treasurer, as well as accepted responsibilities for a number of other positions.

Since Dr. Caraway will be retiring from active service, many throughout the Conference would like to honor him with a special evening. With the encouragement of Bishop William B. Oden, Sunday evening, June 2, has been set aside as a time for such an occasion. First United Methodist Church in Shreveport will host a banquet at 7 p.m. in Dr. Caraway's honor. Tickets are $9 each. Those interested in attending, please send a check for the number of reservations desired by May 15 to:

Rev. Larry Stafford
10000 Blackwater Road
Baker, LA 70714

Retirement Home to be Dedicated in May

A service of Dedication for the Retired Ministers home in Slidell is scheduled for Saturday, May 18 at 10:00 a.m. Dr. H. Warren Blakeman, North Shore District Superintendent, will lead this worship experience. This house, located at 1558 Wildwood Lane, was purchased jointly by the First United Methodist Church of Slidell and the Retired Ministers Homes Board May 14, 1976. The church provided furnishings for the home. Jim and Hazel Lea Ailor have been the only ministerial family to occupy this residence.

Because of a need on the part of interested clergy and concerned laity, in 1953 the Louisiana Annual Conference authorized the formation of the Retired Ministers Homes Board. The Rev. James Grambling, a prime mover in this project, became the first Director and served in that capacity for 19 years. He was followed by the Rev. James Adams who held the position for 17 years. Since its inception this Board has existed as an agency for rendering service to retired Louisiana Methodist ministers and their families.

The first home was built in 1956. Securing this home in Slidell was especially significant because the Board for the first time had property in all districts of the Conference. There are now forty homes throughout the state, a six-unit apartment building and a duplex in Ruston. A recent survey of ministers who will be eligible to retire within the next ten years indicated that 37 anticipate requesting housing through the Retired Ministers Homes Board. This ministry has been, and continues to be, dependent upon the financial support of individuals and special offerings from the churches.

Laypersons and local churches are encouraged to build a home in their community. This can also be done jointly with the Board paying up to $30,000.00 on the project. An excellent plan, used in the construction of two new homes, is for the retiring minister to share the cost of construction with the Board. Also, individuals are encouraged to donate property and to make memorial gifts or make contributions in honor of someone.

1990 was a very good year for this ministry in many ways. A lovely home in Downsville was occupied for the first time by a minister and his wife in June. A small home in Ruston was completely remodeled and enlarged at a cost of $34,000.00 and is now occupied. A new home in Ruston was built as a joint enterprise with the Board and a minister and his friends sharing in the cost of construction.

The value of this program is verified by the many expressions of appreciation from the satisfied residents of these homes. Methodists of Louisiana are to be commended for making this ministry a reality and are encouraged to enhance its effectiveness by continuing support.

Retirement home located in Slidell.

CHILDREN'S HOMES OFFERING
SUNDAY, MAY 12TH

METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME
RUSTON

METHODIST HOME OF NEW ORLEANS
NEW ORLEANS

Children's Home Group
Special Page on Page 6
(page 5 in local editions)

Editorial

Seizing a golden opportunity

A more exciting and challenging mission opportunity is hard to imagine!

That's how we regard plans by the General Board of Global Ministries to extend United Methodism's outreach into the Soviet Union (see UMR, April 23).

A mere five years ago, such an opportunity was unthinkable. The Soviet Union was a closed society, particularly regarding religion. For more than 70 years, Soviet people had been severely restricted from contact with "outside" religious groups.

Since 1986, however, those restrictions have been relaxed by an official policy of "glasnost" (openness).

Hence, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Peace Fund, a quasi-official goodwill agency, were able to invite Global Ministries leaders to visit the Soviet Union. Furthermore, they extended the amazing offer to United Methodists to plant UM churches on Soviet soil and provide humanitarian assistance to the Soviet people.

During that visit, Global Ministries leaders witnessed evidence of the "spiritual starvation" of the Soviet people. That's shown by, among other things, the people's eagerness to reclaim church buildings from the government for Christian worship services, baptisms, and weddings.

The United Methodist visitors also saw signs of literal starvation for food and other material aid, and a need for theological education resources.

As Christians, we dare not delay seizing this golden opportunity to "get our foot in the door" toward meeting the urgent spiritual and physical needs of our Soviet neighbors.

Our basic motivation, rooted in Christian compassion, should be reinforced by an awareness that, more than we often recognize, they also are our spiritual relatives.

Soviet culture is deeply influenced by Christianity. But because of a long history of religious repression, large numbers of Soviet people have been exiled in their own land from their Christian heritage.

We should back our mission board's efforts to end that exile. Global Ministries leaders are right to point out, however, that we need to act quickly and boldly lest civil breakdown in the Soviet Union curtail this historic opportunity.

Two immediate responses by individuals and congregations are in order:

✓ Pray for church leaders and others, including those in the Soviet Union, who are working to turn their dreams of mission into reality.

✓ Donate generously to their efforts through your church treasurer. Mark your donation for Advance No. 011510-1RA.

FaithLine

'Bryan hit a home run, but he'll lose game'

EDITOR'S NOTE: The controversy between 14-year-old Bryan Wrzesinski and the shopowner from whom he bought a valuable "Nolan Ryan" baseball card much below market value ended recently in an out-of-court settlement. Both dropped claim to the card and agreed to put it up for auction, the proceeds going to charity. We approve.

The Reporter recently invited readers to call our FaithLine answering machine and tell us their response as Christians to the controversy involving the purchase of a valuable baseball card by Bryan Wrzesinski of Wheaton, Ill., at a price he knew to be far too low.

Here is a sampling of responses:

Todd Forman, Pembroke, Mass.: I think that young Bryan has hit a home run, but I think he's going to lose the game.

The sale of a valuable baseball card prompted a controversy about right and wrong. Reporter readers responded.

Charlotte Murphy, Denver, Colo.: I think the parents were totally wrong. My parents would have told me: "You can't buy that for that amount. If it was really $1,200.00, you're not about to pay $12.00 for it. So just take it right back there and I'll go with you."

The 6th Grade Sunday School Class, First United Methodist Church, Corpus Christi, Texas: We believe Bryan's parents should have immediately advised Bryan to settle his disagreement with the shopkeeper. They should have organized a meeting with the shopkeeper and accompanied Bryan. To begin the meeting, they should have asked both Bryan and the shopkeeper to put himself in the other's place.

Virginia Smith, Nashville, Tennessee: If I were his parent, I would certainly ask him to take back the card.

Aaron Walker, Lewisville, Texas: (age 13, now learning about Christ) A year ago, I probably would have taken the opportunity and bought the card. But now, because I know the difference between right and wrong, I believe I would have paid the right price for it or I would have taken the card back.

Susan Pope, North Hollywood, Calif.: I would tell him the Golden Rule, as you put in the paper. I would also tell him that stealing, where it's "legal" or caused by somebody else's mistake, at whatever level, taking from others, is wrong. The best is always to share, to return the change you were given when you didn't need it.

Judy Avery, Erie, Ill.: As a Christian, I would have felt as though there had been a mistake made and therefore the card would have to go back. Anything other than that would be stealing and would be wrong.

Karen Allison, Dallas, Texas: If I were his parent, I would not *advise* him, I would *tell* him that he must return the card. It's the only ethically and morally correct thing to do. I would be very disappointed and shocked to find that he had not immediately told the clerk that she had made a mistake in the first place. I guess the boy just reflects his parents' attitudes and his upbringing.

Letters to the Editor

Christians should do more to aid Palestinians

I wish to expand upon James Lansdowne's timely message for United Methodists to back Palestinians by refraining from traveling to Israel (see UMR, April 19).

It also would help to write our State Department, representatives, senators, the President and even Israel's Prime Minister of our feelings.

For years greedy, corrupt politicians in Israel and the United States exploited biblical misinterpretations. But the plan to "take Palestine" began in the late 1800s when atheist Theodore Herzl began World Zionism, a political movement.

Does the Christian Bible tell us to accept torture, dispossession, occupation and dehumanization of other people? Of course not. This occurs everyday in occupied Palestine with the help of our taxes.

Jesus did not stand by and watch injustices. As Christians, we are justified in trying to help have a just peace and to see the original intent of the United Nations carried out: two states for two peoples and the internationalization of Jerusalem for three major religions.

James V. Rogers
Stone Mountain, Georgia

Better case needed

The Rev. J. Phillip Wogaman's juxtaposition of values between hornosexual detractors and the stoning of idolaters leaves much to be desired (see UMR, April 19).

The belief that homosexuality is sinful deals with conviction, while the stoning of idolaters deals with punishment—two different concepts. It is not unusual for United Methodist clergy to confuse these two ideas in their pursuit of liberal policy. I would have expected more from a professor of theology.

Idolatry is recognized by all United Methodists as sinful despite the fact that we would not stone them to death. We would minister to them and warn all of the danger of idolatry.

If homosexuality is to be argued as a legitimate avenue of a Christian lifestyle, such contrived arguments must be avoided in lieu of more sophisticated and consistent reasoning.

Thomas Seals
Skokie, Illinois

'He loves you' works

What do people mean when they exclaim, "Jesus Christ!?"

Unfortunately, as Reva Jane Beadling pointed out, our Savior's name is spit out of unsanctified mouths in frustration and rage (see UMR, April 12).

It hurts to hear it. How should we respond?

In my old work group, I used to remind my co-workers, "He loves you," every time they mentioned His name. I got mixed reviews, but eventually one of the buzz phrases around the area was, "Jesus Christ! I know, I know. He loves me."

I am convinced that no matter what the motivation for saying it, the truth of that statement touched home every time it was spoken. And it usually served to melt the stress that produced the "expletive."

I'm more hesitant to tell strangers the "good news." Still, I have seen large, self-assured men fumble with their change and stumble out the door like little boys after hearing that Jesus does love even them!

The message of God's love is unsettling to anger and pain and it can never be wasted. "Jesus loves you" may be what this stressed-out angry world is dying to hear.

Rebecca Vosberg
Tulsa, Oklahoma

'Shh! That's my boss!'

In response to the April 12 "My Witness" column on how to handle people using the Lord's name in vain, my simple and direct solution is to say, "Shhh! That's my boss you are talking about!"

Donald J. Johnson
Monticello, Indiana

Remarks appreciated

I was so pleased to read Stephen Swecker's remarks concerning President Bush in his April 12 column. I, too, have been praying that our president and other leaders would seek and follow God's will when making decisions of national and international nature.

Especially during the Gulf Crisis, I felt we needed God's guidance as we dealt with non-Christian people and their problems. What was God's will? I prayed that God would show our president the way.

I have been favorably impressed with our president's actions and decisions (even though I am not of his party), and I feel that he is a Christian and is sincere when he publicly asks the people to pray and openly vows his belief in God. I pray there are more public leaders who follow his example.

Ramona C. Kelley
Kountze, Texas

Remarks not appreciated

This refers to the April 5 article headlined, "Stacked homosexuality study charge met by angry denial."

As a result of his quote—"I am outraged by people in the church who say the (homosexuality) study committee is stacked"—I nominate Donald Hayashi of California for the outrageous statement of the year.

For starters, let Mr. Hayashi name one person from his state on the study committee who did not support changing paragraph 71F before being placed on the study committee.

Charles A. Woodworth
Cut Bank, Montana

My Witness

It just makes good sense to support 'home church'

By EUNICE STICKLAND

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Eunice Stickland is a member of Calvary United Methodist Church, San Jose, Calif. (California-Nevada Annual Conference).

One reason I give to the church, is that it is my "home" and I am a member of the family.

A friend remarked recently, "We used to attend a certain church but we don't go anymore. They were always asking for money."

Churches *do* always ask for money. My home church asks for money. Then I remembered other "homes" that are so important to me: Home Town, Home County, Home State, Homeland. Not one of these ever *asks* me for money. They *demand* it: "Pay this amount by this date," or else!

I study that budget

So, when a member of my church sends me an estimated budget for the coming year with a pledge card in case I wish to contribute, I study that budget carefully.

Because my home church is United Methodist and therefore "connectional," we pay our share in response to district, conference and general church "askings."

Some ask, "Why send money far away? Why not use it locally?"

On my pledge card I read: "Unless you designate otherwise, 85 percent of your gift will be used locally."

We are a shared-housing church. Every Sunday afternoon a Korean Presbyterian congregation uses our sanctuary and church school rooms.

In an older part of our property, the Filipino Faith United Methodist Church has renovated a large hall which they use for a sanctuary. Frequently our two choirs join to give beautiful concerts.

But the Christian concern of my home church goes far beyond the budget. Every Sunday morning a basket is passed for a "love offering" from all who wish to contribute. From this fund we were able to assist a young mother-member when she lost her infant and her own mother in a fire.

His report inspired us

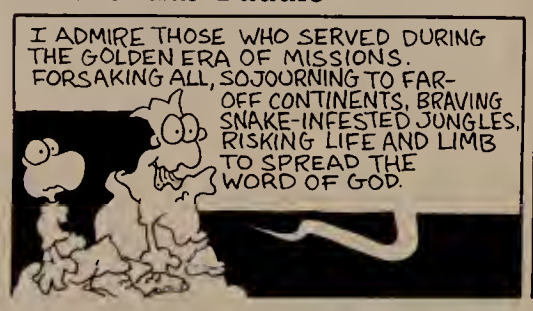
From this "second mile" giving we were able to pay the transportation for a young male church member and university student who had an opportunity to attend a World Peace Conference in London.

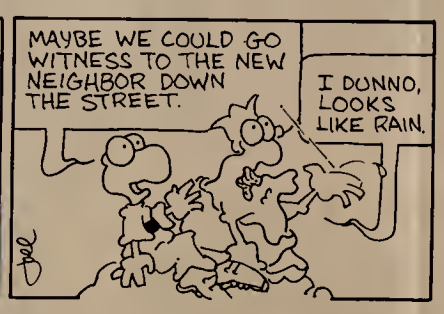
I am convinced I want to sign the pledge card, but how much shall I contribute weekly?

In our church newspaper came this good suggestion:

"Come to terms with any struggle you may have about giving to the church, share your small loaves; when given freely, they will multiply."

Pontius' Puddle





Welcome to new Reporter readers in Tyler, Texas

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 1,200 member-families of **Marvin United Methodist Church in Tyler, Texas** (Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Tyler, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor" and "Here I Stand."

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And this is love, that we follow his commandments; this is the commandment, as you have heard from the beginning, that you follow love" (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: 1 Thessalonians 4:13)

Readings for week of May 6

Monday: Psalms 98:1-3
Tuesday: Psalms 98:4-9
Wednesday: Acts 10:44-48
Thursday: Acts 10:34-43
Friday: John 15:9-17
Saturday: John 15:18-27
Sunday: 1 John 5:1-6

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Faith watch

EARTHQUAKE RELIEF: Portions of Costa Rica and Panama are digging out from an earthquake that brought great destruction to both countries in and around their border on the Atlantic side. The devastation is greatest in the port town of Limon, in Costa Rica, and the Bocas del Toro area on the Panama side. The United Methodist Committee on Relief has issued **Advance No. 507400-7** for relief efforts in the earthquake affected areas. UMCOR disaster specialist Lloyd Rollins traveled to Costa Rica on April 26, to assess the area, and arrange the shipment of food, tents, medical supplies, and other emergency supplies into the region.

ABOLITION SOUGHT: Two Christian activists who have been critical of some grants made by the National Endowment for the Arts now say the federal agency should be abolished outright. The Rev. Donald Wildmon, president of the American Family Association in Tupelo, Miss., and Beverly LaHaye, president of Concerned Women for America, called for the dismantling of the NEA after learning that it has granted $12,000 to the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

Donald Wildmon

PRECIPITOUS DROP: Although Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in San Francisco has remained relatively aloof from the theological controversy that has struck other Southern Baptist theology schools in recent years, it has suffered a "precipitous drop in enrollment," according to its president, the Rev. William O. Crews. He said "the budget hemorrhaging of the past few years has been stopped." However, the president also noted that 419 students are enrolled throughout Golden Gate seminary's three campuses this academic year, compared to 444 the previous year and 530 the year before that.

NEW SERMON FORM SOUGHT: Sermons that proclaim the gospel in the 21st century must be "cleansed from the prejudice and superiority that have poisoned preaching in the past," almost 600 pastors and worship leaders were told in Nashville recently by the Rev. Thomas Troeger, who used a series of fictional characters to illustrate his talk. He said that preaching must involve more than mastering homiletical methods. It calls, he said, "for expanding and deepening the sources that feed the mind and heart of the preacher."

EDITOR NAMED: Greg Warner, 36, associate editor of the Florida "Baptist Witness," has been named the first full-time editor of Associated Baptist Press, the agency that was set up in September as an alternative to Baptist Press, the official news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

New archbishop is enthroned

LONDON—Dr. George Carey stands in the new robes in which he was enthroned April 19 as the 103rd archbishop of Canterbury, spiritual head of 70 million Anglicans, including U.S. Episcopalians. Princesses Diana and Margaret attended but Queen Elizabeth followed the tradition of staying away so she would not distract attention from the new archbishop. Also attending: British Prime Minister John Major, U.S. Episcopal Bishop Edmond Browning, evangelist Billy Graham, leaders of the opposition parties and the majority of cabinet members.

'Reach margins'

UM body makes calls for '92

United Methodist News Service

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Increased efforts to reach individuals and groups who traditionally have been on the margins of society and the church are being called for by United Methodism's top program coordinating body.

Meeting April 20-24, the General Council on Ministries (GCOM) voted to send to the church's top legislative assembly in 1992 proposals intended to strengthen ministry to older adults, the hearing-impaired and those in prison.

The council also endorsed a comprehensive program for Hispanic ministries and made plans for its 126 elected directors to visit Native American centers and projects before their December meeting.

Programs still under review

Still under review are possible four-year (1993-96) "special programs" dealing with drugs and substance abuse, campus ministry, and peace with justice. A decision on whether to recommend these three programs to the 1992 General Conference will be made in December.

GCOM directors spent about 90 minutes reviewing the work to date of the denomination's Committee to Study Homosexuality. The program council will consider that committee's final report in December.

No general debate on the issue took place at the April meeting, with about 30 minutes spent in small-group conversation and prayer and another 30 minutes on watching a "Catch the Spirit" TV program on the issue.

Study generates letters

Reporting on the homosexuality study, that group's chairperson, the Rev. Nancy Yamasaki of Spokane, Wash., said the study has generated hundreds of letters, "some hostile, some even threatening."

Study committee members will complete their work at a meeting Aug. 22-25 and will forward their final conclusions to the GCOM executive committee meeting Sept. 16-17.

Plenary sessions at the April meeting were devoted almost entirely to how much money should be sought for work of the denomination's program agencies during 1993-96.

Under church law, the program coordinating council and the church's general treasury agency determine the amount to be recommended and its distribution among the agencies. Final decisions will be made by the 1992 General Conference.

After two unsuccessful attempts to lower the amount, a request for $187.6 million for 1993-96 was forwarded to the treasury agency. The comparable total during 1989-92 is $150 million.

The calls for reductions were tied to tightened annual conference budgets in the face of rising medical insurance and other administrative costs.

In another action related to general agencies of the church, GCOM directors asked that a consultation be convened to discuss structure of the church at national and international levels. The denomination's present agency structure was set up by the 1972 General Conference.

Some groups within the church are calling for changes in the alignment of general agencies to be made at the 1992 General Conference, and a number of annual conferences are reviewing their organizational patterns.

FLORIDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE PHOTO

Washing soles for souls

Part of the Maundy Thursday story for Christians is Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet. Part of Maundy Thursday this year for members of First United Methodist Church of Miami, Fla., was Shoes or Socks Project of the church, which allowed them to minister to homeless people by washing their feet and then providing them with new socks and sneakers donated by church members. Jane Ross, missions leader of the church, supported by the pastors, challenged members to donate footgear for at least 150 people. Sixteen University of Miami Wesley Foundation students helped with the project and a Holy Communion service.

If your church isn't growing, is it slipping?

From news service reports

What category describes your local church?

A. a growing church
B. on a plateau
C. declining congregation

If category A is not your answer, church growth specialist the Rev. Lyle Schaller offers a seven-point test to indicate whether your church is headed for plateau or decline.

Although not a definitive list, these items are common indicators of churches that are not growing, said Mr. Schaller, a United Methodist minister and author who serves as a parish consultant with the Yokefellow Institute in Richmond, Ind.

1. How long has the church been meeting in this particular space? "If more than 15 years, you're probably headed for decline," Mr. Schaller said. "Growth causes churches to adapt their space to meet new needs."

2. When was the last adult Bible class started? "If more than two or three years, get nervous," he warned. "In larger churches, three months is too long to go without starting a new class."

3. Is the church accumulating capital or consuming capital? "If you are in a capital accumulation stage, you're probably headed up. If you're living off accumulated capital, you will tend to go down," Mr. Schaller said.

The reason: growing churches will add to their capital assets each year as a result of their vision for the future, while dying churches will survive off the fruits of the past.

4. Do baptisms exceed deaths? "In a growing church baptisms should exceed deaths by at least two to one, ideally three to one," Mr. Schaller said. Net growth results when more people are coming into the church than leaving either by death or transfer.

5. Is the adjusted value of member giving going up? Growing churches will show an increase in giving every year, he explained.

6. Do transfers in from other denominations exceed transfers from denominations other than yours? Growing churches tend to attract more people from outside their denomination, revealing the attractiveness of the church in the local marketplace, he said.

7. What is the most exciting landmark in the life of the congregation? "By this I mean the one event that everyone in the church recalls and says, 'Ever since, we've never been the same.' If that was more than 15 years ago, get nervous."

Annual conferences to focus on election of 1992 delegates

United Methodist News Service

Delegates to the 1992 United Methodist General Conference from the United States and Puerto Rico will be elected this spring.

When elections are completed by June 21 in the denomination's 72 annual (regional) conferences, a total of 441 clergy and 441 laity will have been chosen to join 116 other United Methodists from Africa, Europe and the Philippines in making policy for the church during 1993-96.

The 1992 General Conference will open May 5 in Louisville, Ky., and run through May 15. It is the first time the sessions have been held in the Southeastern Jurisdiction since Atlanta in 1972.

In addition to General Conference delegates, another 1,064 delegates—half clergy and half lay—will be elected to five jurisdictional conferences held the week of July 12-19, 1992.

At least 15 bishops are expected to be elected, and all bishops assigned for 1993-96 during those sessions.

Selection of delegates to the church's top policy-making body and the jurisdictional conferences will be a highlight of this year's annual conference sessions.

Other major business will include setting conference budgets for 1992 and appointing pastors to churches they will serve for the next 12 months.

Youth needs discussed by board

By FRANCES SMITH
United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—As increasing numbers of children and youth exhibit signs of social pathology, United Methodist community centers, schools and residences are pioneering ways to demonstrate that Christians care about them.

Representatives of four of the 101 institutions related to the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries talked about their services April 13 during the board's spring meeting.

Demographic changes—more single-parent families and working mothers, different racial/ethnic makeup of immigrants and a concentration of the poor in urban areas—have impacted family life in the United States, according to the Rev. Kinmoth Jefferson of the board's National Division.

Caroline Wareham, mental health worker at McCurdy School in Espanola, N.M., told of counseling children too distracted to learn because of conflicts at home and changes taking place in their bodies and their lives.

"We need to teach that grief is a normal process," she said, "that people learn in different ways, that self-esteem can be improved, that abusive families can get healthier and that there can be recovery after addiction."

Wareham has developed a response team to help survivors of an unexpected death. The death of an eighth-grader, for example, gave an opportunity for the team to work with all eighth-graders on coping with grief.

Benjamin J. Kendrick, director of the Marcy-Newberry Association in Chicago's inner city, reported that gangs run by hardened criminals now control entire communities there.

His center's nightly teen program, which includes midnight basketball games, has reduced crime dramatically in the area between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m., he said.

A housing outreach program that trains young people in carpentry, plumbing and other business schools has placed 250 people in jobs in the last two years.

Gloria Tan, executive director of the Gum Moon Residence in San Francisco's Chinatown, said a 1984 National Division grant was used to create an Asian Women's Resource Center there. The center, which serves new immigrants and arrivals, offers children's activities and trains teens in management skills and job applications through its thrift shop.

The residence's newest effort is its parent/child development program, which offers workshops on such topics as nutrition, child development and health and child abuse, Tan said.

UCCs angry, say they were omitted from survey

By GARY O'GUINN
Religious News Service

NEW YORK—The U.S. Census is not the only survey being criticized for underpolling key constituencies.

The United Church of Christ, the mainline Protestant church largely descended from the Puritans, has called a new major survey of American religious identity (see Reporter, April 12) "seriously flawed," charging that the denomination was left out of the study in an apparent confusion over names.

But the researcher who designed and directed the study for the City University of New York, Dr. Barry Kosmin, said the criticism was based on an incorrect understanding of the survey's goal.

'We weren't mentioned'

In a letter to "The New York Times" the day after the paper ran a page one story on the survey, Dr. Beverly Chain, communications spokesperson for the United Church of Christ, said the story, headlined, 'Portrait of Religion in U.S. Holds Dozens of Surprises,' "held a major one for the United Church of Christ; we weren't mentioned."

Dr. Chain said the poll, asking 113,000 people their religious affiliation, tabulated the 1.6-million-member United Church of Christ in the same category with the similarly-named but smaller and very different Church of Christ.

The poll listed respondents who identified themselves as "Congregational" in a separate category, but failed to note that "most Congregationalists belong to the UCC," wrote Dr. Chain.

When Congregational Christian Churches merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ, the Congregationalists were the larger stream of the two traditions, explained Hans Holznagel, a spokesman at the denomination's Cleveland headquarters.

Key word is 'united'

As for the confusion of the two "Churches of Christ, the key word is 'united.' It wasn't used a great deal by respondents. There was a tendency among (UCC) members not to say 'united,' to distinguish themselves," Dr. Kosmin said.

Most of the responses to the religion question were "generic answers," said Kosmin.

If people said "Protestant," they were asked "what kind of Protestant?" Dr. Kosmin said.

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Faith connections

AID FOR SOVIET MISSIONS Direct financial support by United Methodists for mission outreach in the Soviet Union has been made possible through the church's program of "Advance" designated giving. Approval for the Extended Mission in the U.S.S.R. was voted April 20 by directors of the Advance. Initial efforts under the "second-mile" program will be concentrated in Estonia and Latvia and in the Leningrad area (see UMR, April 26). Gifts to the Soviet Advance should be designated for No. 011510-1RA (see related editorial, Page 2).

PRAYERS FOR LIBERIA: Elected directors of the General Board of Church and Society have called on United Methodists to respond to the Bishops' Appeal for Liberia and to keep Liberian United Methodists in their prayers. In a prayer for Bishop Arthur Kulab of Monrovia, Liberia—an elected member of the board—United Methodism's social action agency recently said, "We pray and urge that there be restitution of communal service, property and basic human needs. . . . We pray that a just resolution will allow Bishop Arthur Kulah and our missionaries to return safely to continue their service to the Liberian people." Church and Society directors have also urged the United Nations to take an active role in resolution of the conflict.

Bishop Kulah

WITHDRAWAL URGED: Leaders of the Philippines United Methodist Youth Fellowship have issued a statement asking the U.S. to withdraw its military bases from their nation. "Newscope," the United Methodist weekly newsletter, said the statement, endorsed by other Filippino youth groups, "strongly denounce(s) all foreign intervention in the socio-economic, political and cultural life of our country." The youths have asked their annual conferences to join them in the demand for withdrawal of U.S. bases before Sept. 16, 1991.

SENEGAL MISSION: The General Board of Global Ministries World Division has approved a new mission initiative in the West African country of Senegal. Missionaries will soon be recruited to implement planned programs of primary health care, vocational training, and literacy for youth and and young adult women. The Council of Bishops has assigned administrative oversight of this program to the West Africa Central Conference.

AIDS MINISTRY CITED: The AIDS Interfaith Network of North Texas, Inc., headed by a United Methodist, the Rev. Charles Carnahan, is one of 19 organizations receiving the 1991 President's Volunteer Action Award. The awards were created in 1982. Presentations were made at the White House April 26.

MISSIONARY DIES: Sherwood Hall, 97, a retired medical missionary of The United Methodist Church who served in Korea and India, died of a heart attack April 5 in Richmond, British Columbia. Born in Seoul, Dr. Hall was the son of Metbodist missionary doctors. He founded the first tuberculosis sanitarium in Korea and introduced TB Christmas Seal campaigns in Korea, India and Pakistan. His work was honored by Korea and Japan. A bilingual memorial service in Korean and English was held April 10 in Richmond.

MAYOR REMAINS PASTOR: The Rev. Emmanuel Cleaver, newly-elected mayor of Kansas City, will be re-appointed senior pastor of the 1,839-member St. James-Paseo United Methodist Churcb in Kansas City. Bishop W.T. Handy (Missouri Area) said, "We're happy to maintain the presence of the church in the mayor's office where there will be a symbol of ethics and at the same time maintain the integrity of the church." Officials of the Missouri West Annual Conference said Mr. Cleaver's status will be "less than full-time." An additional full-time minister is expected to be appointed to that church during annual conference sessions in late May.

NEW EDITOR: Alma E. Graham, a former editor, author and corporate consultant for McGraw Hill, Inc., has been named editor of "New World Outlook," official mission magazine published by the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. For 15 years she has been employed by McGraw Hill as an executive editor and national consultant. A Woodrow Wilson Fellow, she is the author of two books and was co-author of the User's Guide to the American Heritage Dictionary.

AMENDMENT REQUESTED: The General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division will ask the 1992 General Conference to consider an amendment to the Social Principles statement on "The Nurturing Community." Part of a subsection on abortion would be amended to read (proposed new language in bold face) "Government laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience and should not intrude into private decisions concerning reproductive rights." The division will also request planners of 1992 Schools of Christian Mission to consider discussion groups on the United Methodist Church's position on responsible parenthood and abortion rights.

Clothes 'spun' into Bibles for Soviet children

UM high school youths collect used clothing to raise money for Russian 'Book of Life'

By CATHY FARMER
United Methodist News Service

JACKSON, Tenn.—Rumpelstiltskin is alive and well, spinning used clothing into Bibles for Russian school children.

Fantasy became fact in the parking lot of Jackson's First United Methodist Church as senior high youth loaded hundreds of boxes of used clothing onto a trailer. The clothes are destined to be sold to the needy through Soviet government stores.

Money earned helps produce "The Book of Life," which contains Bible passages including the four gospels and the first two chapters of Acts, study questions and an outline of how to live the Christian life.

Russian permission given

The Russian parliament minister of education reportedly has given permission for every school child to receive a copy of "The Book of Life."

The project had its beginning when Larry Keefauver, coordinator of Reach the Children, spoke to the youth group and its leaders during a March retreat. The goal of Reach the Children is to put a Bible into the hands of every Russian school child.

Susan Hay, the church's director of children and youth ministries, said the clothing is sold to Russian people at about one tenth the black-market price of jeans, which can amount to "three or four months' wages." Money realized from the sale helps produce "The Book of Life" and pay for shipping the books to Leningrad.

> ***The clothing is sold to Russian people at about one tenth the black-market price of jeans, which can amount to "three or four months' wages."***
> **—Susan Hay**

Ms. Hay said the youth group will earn $1 for every 25 pounds of clothing collected. And, they "have agreed to tithe the money they earn, giving a tenth to our church's work area on mission."

"It's a labor of love" for the youth, according to Tommy Allen, the church's youth coordinator. "Reach the Cbildren is allowing the young people to make Christ available to other young people," he said.

Nearly every family at the church took two boxes to fill with clean and mended clothing.

"One of our members filled 12 boxes and she said she hadn't even made it up to her attic yet," Ms. Hay said.

And help has been arriving from other sources since the project was made public. Loads of clothes were promised by The Mustard Seed, an ecumenical clothing bank in Milan, Tenn., and a Seventh-day Adventist group offered leftover clothing from a drive for persons affected by a recent tornado in the area.

According to Ms. Hay, the youth "love doing something for another culture . . . things they take for granted, as simple as providing a Bible."

Youth worked all day

More than half of the youth showed up to work all day on a recent Saturday. "And it was hard work. Those boxes weigh about 30 pounds apiece, and after you work an hour, you feel it!" Ms. Hay said.

The Jackson church is believed to be the first United Methodist church to be involved in the program, "and we are going to make this an ongoing project," Ms. Hay said.

Each box filled with clothing will provide eight-10 Bibles; Jackson First's filled trailer will provide nearly 90,000.

A labor of love indeed.

Ms. Farmer is editor of the Memphis Annual Conference edition of The United Methodist Reporter.

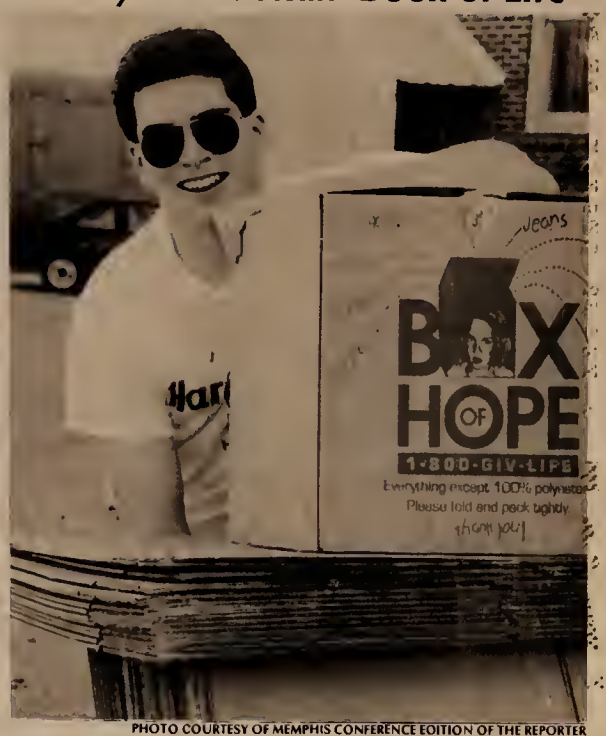

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMPHIS CONFERENCE EDITION OF THE REPORTER

Scott Murray, president of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship at Jackson (Tenn.) First United Methodist Church, hefts a box filled with clothing onto a trailer in the church parking lot. The clothing is destined for Russia (see story).

Board members plan meeting with grape growers/workers

By DENISE J. STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—What's the current situation in California regarding a boycott against table grapes?

A team from the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society hopes to answer that question via a June 22-29 consultation in California.

Six elected directors from the social action agency have been asked to meet there with grape growers and vineyard workers for a dialogue on issues involved in the boycott.

Included in the consultation will be representatives from the two United Methodist annual conferences in that state—California-Nevada and California-Pacific.

Jaydee Hanson, staff executive for the agency's environmental justice work area, said, "This session will not be like the typical hearings in major cities. We plan to go where the farm workers are—right in the San Joaquin Valley."

Mr. Hanson told the Reporter that the board also hopes to get a better understanding of current United Methodist ministries with farm workers in the Central Valley.

In other actions at its recent semi-annual meeting the Church and Society board:

■ Voted to ask the church's General Council on Ministries to make "Peace With Justice" a "special program emphasis" in the church during 1993-96;

■ Approved $116,849 in ethnic local church grants for 12 social action programs;

■ Recommended that the board join a coalition against Phillip Morris Tobacco Company and its subsidiary, Miller Brewing Company, because of the firms' high volume of beer advertising aimed at youth and young adults.

Students' spiritual growth sought

United Methodist News Service

ST. LOUIS—Higher education advocates in the United Methodist Church are proposing a $1 million, four-year emphasis on the spiritual and leadership development of United Methodist college students as a denominationwide program, to begin in 1993.

In a unanimous decision recently, members of the United Methodist Division of Higher Education approved plans for a churchwide campus ministry emphasis.

If the proposal is affirmed this fall by the division's parent body, the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, it will be forwarded to the denomination's 1992 General Conference for consideration.

Objective emphasized

Paramount among objectives for the campus ministry emphasis are:

■ Recruiting, training and support for persons committed to campus ministry ("We want to stop bishops from sending people to campus ministry who can't make it anywhere else," said the Rev. Don Shockley, campus ministry executive for the denomination.);

■ Strengthening the worldwide network of United Methodist students through convocations, specially-designed biblical and doctrinal studies and a student newsletter;

■ Developing ways local churches and campus ministries can work together to guide students into church-related professions;

■ Increasing involvement of and services to people of color on campuses, both ministers and students.

900 ministries supported

United Methodists officially support 900 U.S. campus ministries. Half are denominational; half are ecumenical.

Proponents of the campus ministry emphasis drew a parallel between a slump in student participation in campus ministry and declining church membership among youth.

The Rev. Robert Conn, a member of the Higher Education division staff from Nashville, said the number of United Methodist youth in grades 7-12 has dropped from 1.5 million in 1966 to a half million in 1986.

> ***"Evangelism is a neglected feature of campus ministry . . . ."***
> **—Robert Conn**

The slump continues as United Methodist young adults go through college, he said.

"The numbers are a reflection on the state of our feeder system," said Dr. Conn. "Evangelism is a neglected feature of campus ministry, but the fact is that the United Methodist Church is dwindling because we are failing to replenish our numbers among the youth."

He said 1.2 million students enter U.S. colleges each year and that campus ministries "are pivotally located" to nurture not only United Methodists but other students in need of spiritual support and church affiliation.

UMC mission board members warned: Money limited for new outreach efforts

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—While United Methodist Global Ministries board directors and staff anticipated plowing new ground in global mission fields in Africa, Europe and the Soviet Union (see UMR, April 26), they were reminded that money for new missions may not be available if local church askings don't improve next year.

For several years now, those local church askings—part of the denominationwide "fair-share" apportionment called the World Service Fund—have decreased. Receipts for the World Service Fund pay for denominationwide agencies' program work, including missions.

In 1990, the General Board of Global Ministries planned on receiving 89.5 percent of the total of its share of World Service askings. The actual amount received, however, was only 89.05 percent—a $93,945 shortfall.

"There is a substantial need to hear the same old warning," said Stephen F. Brimigion, General Board of Global Ministries treasurer. "I have no desire to evaluate or prioritize program. My warning is that there is no way to keep expanding. . . .

"The handwriting on the wall says further substantial cuts must be made along with considerable reevaluation of our priorities to keep mission outreach in a viable financial position.

"My job is not to tell you what to keep and what should be discarded," continued Mr. Brimigion to United Methodism's missions board. "It is inevitable that you will have to do that."

27 positions not filled

As an example of keeping 1990 actual expenditures within available funds, Mr. Brimigion said approximately 27 positions were not filled last year. Only a few are scheduled to be filled in 1991.

"The General Board of Global Ministries must select what programs will be the focus. The board cannot be all things to all needs," said the treasurer.

Following Mr. Brimigion's presentation, the Rev. Donald E. Messer, a board member from Denver, asked, "How will the General Board of Global Ministries follow up in terms of strategy to lift financial levels to that of the 1980s?"

"I think we're still too passive," said Dr. Messer, who is president of UM-related Iliff School of Theology. "We need to target where the conferences are in sliding from their support."

"If it is somebody else's responsibility (to get annual conferences) to support World Service, we need to take a better role in getting that support."

Following the discussion, Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn (Nebraska Area), president of the global missions board, asked that the board's Research and Development Committee evaluate what must be dropped or whether a program has served its time and is not currently a board priority.

In his report on the Advance for Christ and His Church, United Methodism's second-mile giving to mission programs, Mr. Brimigion said Advance income to World Division for persons in mission has been almost flat for five years. It is about $5.9 million annually.

Giving lags

"For a denomination that continually talks about more persons in mission, extending our outreach around the world, it is discouraging to see that the individual churches do not reflect the same attitude in their Advance giving," the board treasurer asserted.

On a more positive note, board members learned that the "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering in 1990 was $3,031,548, the best income level in its history. That offering supports the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Mr. Brimigion told the mission board that this is "living proof that money is available when the people are contacted and given the opportunity to understand the offering."

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OIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY: Saint Stephen United Methodist Church, Amarillo, Texas, is seeking a full-time lay or ordained person for youth, college, young single, plus additional pastoral opportunities. Large program with 80 + active youth. Send resume to: Rev. Jim W. Smith, 4600 South Western, Amarillo, Tx. 79109, (806) 355-7271.

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Faith grew during wrongful jailing

Two English pub-bombings fatal to 21 led to 16 years' imprisonment

By AUSTIN CARLEY
Religious News Service

LONDON—His Catholic faith kept him going through 16 years spent in a British prison for a crime he didn't commit, a recently freed member of the Irish Birmingham Six said on the British Broadcasting Corporation.

"When we find God," Billy Power said in a recent interview, "strength comes from that discovery itself. Knowledge that you are innocent makes a sentence easier to bear."

His faith is stronger than ever now, "much stronger I reckon," he said.

Mr. Power is one of six Irishmen jailed for life in 1975 for two pub bombings in England in which 21 people died and 182 were seriously injured.

Now 46, Mr. Power was 30 when he was arrested in 1974 for his alleged part in England's biggest mass murder.

'God knew I didn't do it'

"One person, God, knew I didn't do it," he said, when no one in the establishment or press believed in his innocence."We, too, were victims of the bombers.

"I felt a lot of sorrow that 21 people had died in the pub bombings. I can understand how people had suffered. I watched my own family suffer."

Mr. Power said he bears no grudges.

"When we say the Lord's Prayer we forgive others," he said. "I ask for me to be forgiven.

"It is right to assert that wrongs have been done, but I can't call for the people responsible to be punished in any shape or form," Mr. Power said, striking a position at odds with public statements of other members of the Birmingham Six.

Mr. Power said that his faith, aided by prayer and meditation, slowly matured.

Mr. Power said his faith was strengthened day to day over the 16 years as he learned to hold back his anger and not take it out on people within the British judicial system.

He realized "that God does not take away the suffering but does give the grace to overcome it."

That is the message of his experience for the many "falsely imprisoned throughout the world," he explained.

'There is always hope'

"We call Good Friday, Good Friday," he said, referring to his sentence as a cross given him to bear. "But life didn't end there. There is always hope.

"Our release is in a sense like the Resurrection," Mr. Power said, closing the interview.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Dalai Lama appeals to U.S. Congress

WASHINGTON—Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, appealed to the U.S. Congress recently to aid Tibet in its struggle against Chinese government control. The Tibetan leader wore the scarlet and yellow robes of a Buddhist monk and acknowledged applause with his palms pressed together. He was not able to formally address Congress because of Chinese objections, but his informal reception was seen as a warming to his cause.

Review

South African exile's 'gospel music' binds personal faith, social witness

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Gospel music is undergoing something of a revival in this country as it embraces new musical styles, yet rarely does it express both personal faith and social witness.

Modise A. Molefe, who was recently profiled on the United Methodist television program "Catch the Spirit," is a South African musician who sings about personal commitment to Christ and the struggle for a just world.

In Mr. Molefe's "Prisoners of Peace" album, the decision to follow Christ is intertwined with a choice to oppose injustice. We come to Christ, he says, not only as individuals but also as a community of faith.

Nor, for him, is there any contradiction between discipleship and self-fulfillment.

"Lord Jesus, renew my life and set me free," he prays in the first cut on the album, "free to be myself."

Mr. Molefe has a refreshing, even disconcerting, way of joining typical gospel lyrics such as "I am seeking hope and more understanding," with "to be faithful in the midst of the struggle."

He also pleas for us to repent and confess but suggests that our "Moment of Truth" includes facing up to our "participation in the sins of oppression."

"Prisoners of Peace" also stands out from other gospel music in its creative use of everything from American-style gospel choruses to jazz to reggae to South African "township jive."

With great lyrics and some of the best back-up instrumentation this reviewer has heard in a long time, the album is deeply stirring.

Modise Molefe is a refugee who had his master tapes confiscated by the South African government and was forced to flee his homeland.

Yet his music is buoyantly optimistic, giving new voice to Christian hope:

"And we see the light
And we see a new way out
And we see how Jesus changes our lives again and again."

For him, confession and conviction by Christ is an occasion to "give thanks to him."

Now a student in the United States and a member of Chatham United Methodist church in northern New Jersey, Mr. Molefe has performed widely in churches throughout the state.

Until a distributor can be found, the congregation is selling cassettes of his album ($10 from Prisoners of Peace Project, Chatham UMC, 460 Main Street, Chatham, NJ 07923).

After costs have been recovered, Mr. Molefe hopes to donate proceeds from the album to John Wesley Seminary in South Africa.

Methodist founders John and Charles Wesley might have been proud themselves to be associated with music such as this which so well embodies personal piety and social holiness.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Muslims end month of fasting

NEW DELHI—Muslims pray in the upper gallery of the main mosque in the old walled city of Delhi on the occasion of Ei Al-Fitr, which celebrates the end of the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Clergy-scientists label humans 'co-creators'

By RICHARD CIMINO
Religious News Service

NEW YORK—New developments in biology and physics are compatible with the view that humans are "co-creators with God," according to two clergy-scientists who spoke at a recent conference in New York.

"We're at a turning point in understanding the natural order and God's relation to it. . . . Humanity is faced with the possibility of participation in creation," said the Rev. Arthur Peacocke, an Anglican priest and biochemist who is a fellow of St. Cross College at Oxford University.

Dr. Peacocke was a speaker at the Trinity Institute National Conference.

Also speaking at the conference on scientific developments and their implications for Christianity was the Rev. John Polkinghorne, an Anglican priest and physicist who is president of Queens College at Cambridge University.

'Creation is not finished'

Dr. Polkinghorne said that traditional—or mechanical—views of the universe which see creation as a finished work that operates according to predictable laws are being discarded.

A revolution in the physical sciences, known as the "chaos theory," will change the world view of humanity, he added.

The chaos theory holds that the systems of the universe are unpredictable and are open to rapid changes.

Dr. Polkinghorne illustrated the theory by describing how the motion of a butterfly in flight in China can affect the weather in New York a month later.

The theory holds that the various parts of the universe are interrelated and always in the process of evolving.

Such a new framework in physics supports the concept that God's work of creation continues today, Dr. Polkinghorne said.

The Christian teachings of a final transformation of the earth and the return of Christ make new sense, since, according to the chaos theory, the universe is incomplete and open to new developments, he said.

In turning to biology, Dr. Peacocke said that new findings in evolution point to an "ever increasing diversity of new life forms."

The new biological findings on the variety of life suggest an "open-ended universe," where things happen that cannot be predicted, he added.

New developments in biology

The new developments in biology will impact theology and the churches in a number of ways, according to Dr. Peacocke.

The biochemist said that such theories may mean that God created the world using chance, but in such a way that he "loaded the dice in favor of life."

While the concept that God would use chance to create the world is controversial, Dr. Peacocke said that it was God's way of limiting himself so humans could also play a role in creation.

The new biology would also suggest God's immanence—that he operates within creation—rather than his transcendence, or apartness from the world.

Because creation is still taking place, humans are called to "cooperate with God's intentions" and serve as co-creators with him, Dr. Peacocke said.

An emphasis on co-creation will give a "new significance to daily work and help Christians to make a more positive assessment of civilization and technology," he added.

The view that Christians are co-creators with God will also give a stronger role to the laity and take some of the emphasis off bishops and priests in churches, Dr. Peacocke said.

Dear Deborah

Saturday-night sermon prep pinches family

Dear Deborah:

My spouse, an ordained minister with a number of years' experience, regularly writes Sunday's sermon on Saturday night.

Our family is faced with the choice of being supportive by "being there" while the sermon is being composed or leaving my spouse behind while we socialize with friends, attend a concert, etc.

I like to trust that my spouse is really pressured for time or really needs all week to think about the sermon topic. Although I really miss being able to go out on Saturday nights together, I have never complained.

How common and necessary is this practice?

Fevered on Saturday Night

Dear Fevered:

I cannot say how common this practice is. Perhaps some clergy and their spouses would be willing to write me with their knowledge of this practice.

It seems to me it is likely that many pastors prefer to stay home on Saturday night even if the sermon is ready.

You do not say why it is supportive for the family to have to stay home on Saturday nights while the sermon is being written. You do not help write it, do you?

It is not clear from your letter whether your marriage is in trouble and the sermon is being blamed or whether you, your spouse or the church have unrealistic expectations.

Since not all pastors write sermons on Saturday night—and certainly in seminary they are advised to do them earlier in the week—maybe your spouse can rethink this pattern.

If not, I hope your marriage is strong enough for you to go out alone on Saturdays when you want to and that the two of you can do things together some other night.

Prayer can help you see this situation through God's eyes.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Hymn overcame dismay of lonely quietness

Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath his wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

In Lestershire, N.Y., a minister and his wife were invited to teach for a few weeks at the Practical Bible Training School.

During these weeks W. Stillman Martin had many invitations to preach in churches of that area.

Usually his wife, Civilla, accompanied him to the churches, but one Sunday she was ill and remained at home. In the quietness of the lonely day, Mrs. Martin found inspiration to write a hymn.

In it she referred to the assurances of God's care for the Christian in times of adversity. She expressed the repeated affirmation that God will provide sustenance "through days of toil when heart doth fail," and when "dangers fierce your path assail," and "no matter what may be the test."

When her husband returned from his preaching appointment, she showed him the poem.

Immediately he sat down at the small reed organ and composed the music as it now stands. Words and music were published in 1905.

A native of Massachusetts, W. Stillman Martin was educated at Harvard University. He was ordained to the Baptist ministry and began his evangelistic work among Baptist churches. A few years later he joined the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

In 1916, Dr. and Mrs. Martin moved to Wilson, N.C., where he became professor of Bible at Atlantic Christian College.

Three years later they moved to Atlanta, where they spent the following years conducting Bible conferences and evangelistic meetings throughout many states.

Civilla Martin was a helpful colaborer with her husband and collaborated with him in writing many gospel songs. She also wrote texts for other composers.

One well-known song that bears her name is "His Eye Is on the Sparrow," for which Charles H. Gabriel composed the music.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Once in royal David's city"

Tidings of Spring

The daffodil,
glad trumpeter of Spring,
Lift up your head with pride
And shout,
Life and Resurrection
Is what Spring
Is all about!

—JAN WOODARD

New bill may halt foreign volunteers

Religious News Service

JERUSALEM—Christian activists say that a measure billed as targeting illegal Palestinian labor will affect needed foreign volunteers working for Christian groups in Jerusalem.

Volunteers, who generally receive board and a small allowance, will now have to register.

Charles Kopp, chairman of the United Christian Council in Israel, expects many Christian hospitals and schools to be driven away by the bureaucracy and the fees required by the measure.

Children's Homes' Offering Mother's Day May 12, 1991

LA. METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME

Abused, Abandoned & Neglected. Abused, abandoned and neglected children make up the resident population of the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston.

When founded in 1902 we met the great need of that time for a home for children without parents to care for them.

As our world has changed, as our country has changed — Louisiana has changed and so have the needs of today's children and youth.

Young people today need more than the Christian home environment that has always been provided in the Methodist Children's Home in Ruston.

Life Threatening. They need help with their problems. Sometimes these mental and emotional problems are life threatening.

So, we work with the whole person, body, mind, and spirit.

Never before has the need to serve all of Louisiana's children been greater. Children are referred to us from all parts of the state.

Children Turned Away. Unfortunately we must turn away one half of the young people referred to our care because of limited staff and facilities. There are always 94 youth in residence.

Your gift will enable us to continue to meet the needs of Louisiana's young children that have been abused, abandoned or neglected.

Join The Healing Ministry. Your gift will help save young lives.

METHODIST HOME OF NEW ORLEANS

"That they might have life." These words are chiseled on the cornerstone of our building at 815 Washington Ave. Since 1886 we have been involved in ministry to children because we are called as Christians to serve the suffering. Today we serve the abused, abandoned and neglected children without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap.

They Cannot Escape. No one can argue that these children deserved to be abused, or that they could avoid being abused if only they had tried to be better children. They cannot escape abuse on their own so we provide shelter and treatment where they can be protected and healed. The Methodist Home ministers to the child's physical, medical, psychological, educational, and religious needs.

An American Tragedy. In 1989, 2.4 million cases of abuse were reported in the United States. We cannot determine the millions of silent cases that went unreported. Abuse is an "American Tragedy." Over 75% of the cases in Louisiana occur within 80 miles of our home. We are ideally situated to help the increasing number who come to our door. This year we have increased our capacity from 50 to 75 beds and we are already full.

A Conference Mission. We are a State Chartered non-profit mission of the Louisiana Annual Conference. We provide Emergency Service, a Treatment Center, Treatment Homes, and Family Therapy and Counseling Services to abused children and their families.

Warm Hugs ♦ Home Made Cookies ♦ Quiet Talks
Christmas Traditions ♦ Picnics ♦ Birthday Cake
Scraped Knees ♦ Vegetable Gardens ♦ Little League
Piano Lessons ♦ Bedtime Prayers ♦ Dried Tears
Kittens ♦ Back to School ♦ Lunch Boxes ♦ Dance Classes
Swingsets ♦ Hot Chocolate ♦ Lemonade Stands
Allowances ♦ Easter Dresses ♦ Fairy Tales ♦ Bag Lunches
Popcorn Balls ♦ Lullabies ♦ Homework ♦ Beautiful Eyes
Fresh Flowers ♦ Puppies ♦ Playing ♦ Kool-Aid
Homemade Ornaments ♦ Hair Ribbons ♦ Sunday School
School Mornings ♦ Christmas Stockings ♦ Breakfast
Birthday Surprises ♦ Summer Vacations ♦ Dinner Time
Laughing ♦ Peanut Butter & Jelly ♦ Corsages

There is no Substitute for a Good

MOTHER

Methodist Children's Homes
United Methodist Church
Mothers' Day Offering

Two for Two!

Two offerings for our two children's homes:
Mother's Day, 1991 and Christmas Sunday, 1991

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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'The Key Link of United Methodism'

By the time you read this column most appointments for the new conference year will have been completed by the Cabinet.

The appointive process is long, stressful and anxiety-producing for pastors, congregations and Cabinet. There are now more steps than in the past, more consultation, more evaluation, more listening to both congregations and pastors.

Out of about 400 appointments in our conference, approximately one-fourth to one-fifth of our pastors move annually. We are moving toward longer pastorates and that is healthy. In fact, four to eight years should be seen as the normative time frame for an appointment.

While the itinerant appointive system does have its unique stress and strains, I am more and more convinced that it is essential to the mission of United Methodism and more effective than the "call" system.

The key to the effectiveness of appointment making is the District Superintendent working with pastor and lay leadership. The District Superintendency is the key link of United Methodism. It is the glue of the connection. I continually grow in appreciation of the work of this office.

Superintendents have a heavy load. The DISCIPLINE (par. 519-525) gives the office five responsibilities:

1. SUPERVISION: To supervise pastors in determining and clarifying their work of ministry. To evaluate and give feedback in all aspects of ministry; to help pastors and congregations look at the needs of clergy in relation to the needs of congregation.
2. PERSONNEL: To work with clergy, diaconal ministers, and Pastor-Parish Relations Committees in interpreting ministry (for ordained or consecrated persons) and to lead in the recruitment of competent and committed representative ministers without regard to gender or race. Also, to work with the Bishop and Cabinet in appointments of clergy and diaconal ministry.
3. PASTORAL: To give pastoral support to clergy and diaconal ministry; to counsel and encourage the pastors and diaconal ministers.
4. ADMINISTRATION: To have charge conferences; to administer the district office, oversee salary support, co-operate with the district boards of church location and building committees and oversee all United Methodist property in the district.
5. PROGRAM: To be the vital link of The United Methodist Church in all areas of programming priorities.

While these duties are abbreviated and some are in my own words, I believe they fairly reflect the work of the Superintendency as outlined by the DISCIPLINE.

After almost three years in the Episcopacy, I am firmly convinced that the Superintendency is the most vital link in the United Methodist connection. I urge all lay and pastoral leadership not to forget your District Superintendent when you welcome back your pastor or greet your new one.

William B. Oden

Church and Society

Board Members Share Dreams and Dilemmas with the General Board

Mr. Wesley N. Yamaka, Program Associate with the General Board of Church and Society, met with the Louisiana Conference Board of Church and Society in Baton Rouge on Monday, April 22. Mr. Yamaka is visiting all of United Methodism's 72 Annual Conferences in an effort "to develop stronger ties with [each of them]."

Dr. Larry Robertson, chairperson of Louisiana's Board of Church and Society, highlighted the Board's activities during the past few years in Louisiana. Three of its most significant accomplishments are the Board's work in the area of environmental survival, the area of Peace with Justice and the Board's interfaith cooperation in the formation of IMPACT. Dr. Hilda Arndt and the Reverend Swindell Hodges, members of the Board, were instrumental in the success of each.

Dr. Arndt coordinated the week-long visit of two of the coordinators of the Peace with Justice Movement, the Reverend Carol Windrum and her husband Tim Fickenscher, who visited Louisiana during the month of February. Sunday School lessons, youth classes, and church services provided a forum for the Fickenschers' speeches on environmental concerns and peace. Dr. Arndt says that these events were well attended.

Perhaps the most publicized work of the Board, however, comes out of another facet of United Methodists' concern with the environment. Mr. Hodges, armed with an approved resolution from the Board, formed a coalition with other religious groups in the Lafayette area to work with United Methodist laywoman, Sarah Schoeffler, to protect the Louisiana wetlands from coastal erosion. Their dedicated efforts paid off in the strengthening of legislation for the protection of the environment.

Mr. Hodges also discussed the organization of IMPACT in Louisiana. IMPACT is an interfaith coalition formed for the purpose of making an "impact" on the legislature in "the struggle for justice, peace, and the stewardship of the environment" through education, facilitation and advocacy. All interested people are invited to join.

Other issues discussed by the Board of Church and Society this year, according to Dr. Robertson, have been racism, educational reform, the Persian Gulf Crisis, and health care.

The meeting concluded by recommendations, at Mr. Yamaka's request, for ways in which the General Board can help with resources for Louisiana. Suggestions made included the provision by the General Board for workshop models to use in educating local churches to societal needs, greater sharing of success stories along the United Methodist connectional system, more use of video and other technological forms of media and a stronger intentional grounding of church and society issues in a spiritual foundation.

Mr. Wesley N. Yamaka, Program Associate with the General Board of Church and Society, discusses important Board issues with Dr. Hilda Arndt, a member of the Louisiana Board of Church and Society.

Pre-Conference Sessions Set

All lay and clergy delegates to the 1991 Session of the Annual Conference are invited to attend a pre-conference meeting during the month of May. A Pre-Conference meeting has been scheduled in each of the nine districts.

The delegates are encouraged to read the Pre-Conference reports prior to the training session. The purpose of the meeting will be to highlight upcoming conference business and answer concerns and questions about the conference session.

The dates, times and locations for these training sessions are:

May 13	St. Luke's, Shreveport	7:00 p.m.
May 19	St. Luke-Simpson, Lake Charles	3:00 p.m.
May 19	First Church, Baton Rouge	5:00 p.m.
May 20	First Church, Alexandria	7:00 p.m.
May 21	Arcadia Church, Ruston	7:00 p.m.
May 22	St. Timothy's, Mandeville	7:00 p.m.
May 23	First Church, New Orleans	7:00 p.m.
May 23	First Church, Franklin	7:00 p.m.
May 28	Winnsboro Church, Monroe	7:00 p.m.

Notice

Pre-Conference booklets have been mailed to all lay and clergy delegates. If you have not received your copy, please contact the Conference Office and give your name, address and telephone number.

Persons — Churches — Events

Wesley UMC in Mansfield recently celebrated "125 Years of Progress" with special founder's day services. Guest speaker for the historic event was the Rev. Fred Pea of Shreveport and Mary Springfield of Benson. Mr. A. J. Williams, lay leader, served as chairperson for the occasion. The Rev. S. Charles Byrd is pastor.

* * *

Dr. Kenneth R. Reed, Executive Director, United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana, was the guest preacher at **Mount Zion UMC in New Orleans** during the February 10 worship services. In his present position, Dr. Reed counsels churches in fiscal affairs and in opportunities for investment in the Foundation. The Rev. Leslie P. Norris is pastor of Mount Zion.

* * *

First UMC in Kenner recently hosted a "Previous Pastors' Revival" which took place March 10 through the 13th. The Rev. Doug deGraffenried brought the message on Sunday evening, the Rev. Robert Miller was the guest preacher on Monday, the Rev. Brady Forman delivered the message on Tuesday and the Rev. Eddie Morgan was the guest preacher on Wednesday. The Rev. Robert W. Peterson is pastor of First Church.

* * *

The Rev. Augie Aamodt, Director of Development at the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, has recently completed a four-week course of study presented by the National Planned Giving Institute of the Robert Sharp Company, Incorporated. Mr. Aamodt "completed a comprehensive program of seminars on current and deferred major gifts development for charitable institutions, embracing a series of studies on marketing gifts and charitable estate planning, institutional management, and public relations." As a result of his successful completion of the program, he was invited to join the National Planned Giving Association. Previously, Mr. Aamodt completed a week-long study of "Grantsmanship" at the Grantsmanship Center in Los Angeles, California.

* * *

"Challenges of Faith" was the focus of a series of messages for the congregation of **Centenary UMC in Franklinton.** Visiting ministers were the Rev. Melissa Draper of Walker UMC, the Rev. Ted Lawson of Ingleside UMC in Baton Rouge and the Rev. Larry Robertson of First UMC in Ponchatoula. Members and visitors enjoyed a supper and fellowship each evening before the message was delivered. The Rev. Willis Dear is pastor of Centenary.

* * *

The clergy spouses' luncheon, which will be held during Annual Conference, will take place Wednesday, June 5 from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at First UMC in Shreveport. Reservations are required. No tickets will be available at the door. For spouses of an active clergy, the cost for the luncheon is $7; $6 for the spouse of a retired clergy or seminarian. Reservations should be sent to Ellen DeWitt, Route 5, Box 838, Lake Charles, LA 70601. Checks are to be made payable to Mrs. DeWitt. Deadline for reservations is May 25.

* * *

First UMC, LaPlace will hold a revival on Sunday, May 12 through Tuesday May 14. On Sunday, the services will take place at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. On Monday and Tuesday, the services will be held at noon and 7 p.m. Dr. Charles L. Allen will be the featured guest speaker. For 23 years Dr. Allen was pastor of First UMC in Houston, the largest United Methodist Church in the world — over 13,000 members. He retired from the church in May, 1983. He came to to Houston from Grace UMC in Atlanta, Georgia, which, under his leadership, had become the largest United Methodist church in the Southeast. The Rev. Charles P. Strong is pastor of First Church.

* * *

Asbury UMC, Natchitoches, inspired by the Louisiana Gathering, recently celebrated and witnessed for Christ in a variety of ways. On Palm Sunday the children and youth led the congregation in a re-enactment of the first Palm Sunday celebration. That evening, the congregation culminated their Lenten Bible Study in a special service led by the Rev. James Graham, pastor. The Thursday before Easter and Good Friday was also observed. A musical was presented during the 11 a.m. service on Easter.

On April 6 the members of **Asbury, Williams Chapel UMC and St. Mark UMC** held their first Fellowship Picnic since the group had been united as a charge. This was an exciting time for all who attended. Members of the three churches brought food to members who are shut in. Mr. James Gay of St. Mark was chairperson for the event. The Rev. Graham serves as pastor of the charge.

Methodist Children's Homes
United Methodist Church
Mothers' Day Offering

Around the Conference

Troy Sandell, lay leader of Hornbeck UMC, rang the bell in the church tower recently for the first time in 15 years. Kansas City Southern Railroad donated the bell from an old locomotive engine to the church in 1938. Some years later a problem caused the bell to malfunction. At the request of the children in the church, Sandell repaired the bell. The cross on top of the steeple has been a landmark in the area as a guide for aviators, both civilian and military, for years.

Dr. H. Eddie Fox, World Director of Evangelism, the World Methodist Council, and well-known author and speaker, is shown speaking to a group which attended the Evangelism Conference held recently at First UMC in Baton Rouge.

Dulac Community Center Dedication Scheduled

The dedication of the new facility at the Dulac Community Center will be held Saturday, May 11, 1991, at 2 p.m.

A special invitation is extended to all who wish to attend. The Reverend Robin K. Thompson is Executive Director of the Center.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Telling truth about lying

***"If we have chosen the way of falsity we must not be surprised that truth eludes us when we finally come to need it."* —Thomas Merton**

That somber insight by the late Trappist monk is particularly timely in light of a recent survey of moral conduct among Americans.

The survey indicates that alarming numbers of us have indeed "chosen the way of falsity"

Of those polled, 91 percent said they routinely tell lies. These and other findings appear in a book released this week, "The Day America Told the Truth."

Assured of anonymity, the cross-section of Americans responding to some 1,800 questions, made the following admissions:

- 86 percent said that they lie regularly to parents,
- 75 percent lie to friends,
- 73 percent lie to siblings,
- 69 percent lie to spouses.

"Americans are willing to lie at the drop of a hat," said the book's co-author, James Patterson, chairman of J. Walter Thompson, a prominent advertising agency.

"Lying," Mr. Patterson added, "is part of [Americans'] lives."

We who view life from a Christian perspective should not be surprised by such findings, but neither should we be complacent about them.

The Scriptures are filled with examples of the human propensity to lie and "bear false witness." From King David to disciple Peter, the Bible tells us stories of seemingly upright people deceiving others to benefit self.

The new poll of American morals merely confirms what Christians long have confessed: We are sinful creatures and, far too often, "the truth is not in us."

For Christians, however, the human bent to falsehood as a fact of life does not excuse it.

Reckless disregard for the Ninth Commandment—"Thou shalt not bear false witness"—shreds the ties of trust that bind us to God and neighbor.

Hence the relevance of Thomas Merton's insight: Routinely playing fast and loose with the truth undermines our capacity to build relationships that bring joy and meaning to life.

The result, as Jesus pointed out, is a shaky "house built on sand," unable to weather life's inevitable storms and stresses.

By contrast, we as Christians are called to be examples of a "house built on rock," that is, to show through lives of moral integrity that the "way of truth" is stronger and more rewarding than the "way of falsity."

Here I Stand

How best to observe 'discovery of America?'

By JOHN H. EMERSON

We may expect that 1992 will bring to our national scene the 500th anniversary celebration of the so-called "discovery of America" by Christopher Columbus.

Before dawn on Oct. 12, 1492, a sailor on the "Pinta" cited the Bahamian island of Guanahani, so named by the aborigines. Of course, true to the mindset of manifest destiny and colonial conquest, Columbus renamed it San Salvador and took possession of the island!

The admiral's ship log recorded disparaging words about the natives and cavalier remarks about subjugating them.

Rumor has it that in 1992, there may even be designs to name space vehicles or satellites "Nina," "Pinta" and "Santa Maria."

Can we speak truth?

So what? What is an appropriate response of Christians and all people of moral conscience to such an observance? Without impugning people of Spanish or Portuguese heritage, can we rise to speak the truth in love?

I do not presume to speak for the natives of that remote island or for Native Americans, who have suffered indignities, pogroms, and treaty violations ever since this continent became victimized by manifest destiny.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. John H. Emerson is pastor of Lynnewood United Methodist Church, Pleasanton, Ca. (California-Nevada conference).

Neither can I remain silent and leave it to our Indian sisters and brothers to carry the responsibility of consciousness-raising. I can speak as a descendent of Europeans, who came to North America and, wittingly or unwittingly, participated in an arrogant colonialism that has led to the decimation of American Indians. In the process, I am diminished and so are we all!

I believe 1991 would be better spent reflecting upon insights gained from books like "I Buried My Heart At Wounded Knee" and "Seven Arrows," and from films like "Dances With Wolves."

Why not give 1992 a thoughtful, attentive, listening to those Native Americans who may wish to speak to us of their pain and perhaps their hope?

Do we have the will?

Do we have the will and the courage to examine continuing bigotry, systemic racism, power conquests and collective forgetfulness about the atrocities of the past and even of the present?

The energy derived from our moral outrage might well motivate us to write the president, senators and congresspersons, local newspaper editors and petition General Conference to respond appropriately to plans being set in motion to elevate Cristobal's voyage to a magnitude of national salutation.

Such an observance will surely demean those among us, whose ancestors lived on and cared for this land long before our European forebears came and claimed it for themselves, and who were subjected to brutality. The historical record must be set straight—something that was not a part of my childhood education!

Let God transform us

The energy created by our moral indignation might well move us to mingle tears of sorrow with the euphoric post-Desert Storm love of country.

It would do our nation well to acknowledge its imperfections and injustices in a healthy posture of humility and repentance.

I am reminded of St. Paul's words: "Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then, you will be able to know the will of God . . . Do not think of yourself more highly than you should" (Romans 12:2-3).

By God's grace, we may become more committed to "liberty and justice for all." Then may come to pass what Chief Seattle said in 1854 in response to the federal government's desire to buy land from the Indians and the chief's perception of the white man's disrespect for the land and the buffalo:

"We may be brothers after all. We shall see."

My Witness

Put the work of God first, and all other things follow

By BONNIE HARRIS

I am thankful for the aroma of fried chicken coming up the basement stairs into the sanctuary in anticipation of the tasty, traditional covered dish dinner.

I am thankful for the soft newborns who were swallowed-up by Rev. Clayton's robes during baptism as we sang "Jesus Loves Me."

I am thankful for "The Old Rugged Cross" and hundreds of hymns like it which I learned, and learned to love.

I am thankful for the Methodist Youth Fellowship groups where my faith was challenged, and I learned to stand up for what I believed.

I am thankful for the laughter in my mama and daddy's wedding pictures at the historical Eureka Kansas Methodist Church sanctuary, and the peaceful joy I felt in that same sanctuary three years ago at my grandpa's funeral, knowing that he had gone to live with his Lord and Savior.

I am thankful for my grandparents' grandparents who trained their families, generation after generation that God is Love and God is the answer.

I am thankful for my sister's spiritual strength that supported her and her two children through the death of her 30-year-old husband.

I am thankful for my Bolivian children—friends who came to know Jesus because missions had support from our local churches to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have given only a glimpse of the reasons why I am thankful to give to the Lord. I could never match the gifts He has given to me.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Tough financial times as a student these past six years did not keep me from tithing, because giving to the work of the Lord is like planting seeds. The more seeds, the greater the harvest.

I want to challenge every United Methodist to pray about this opportunity. When God's work is placed first, everything else in your life will flourish.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Bonnie Harris a member of Cedar Hill United Methodist Church, Cedar Hill, Texas (North Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Letters to the Editor

Holding politicians accountable

Your recent editorial regarding President Bush's statement, "I am a Christian," hit a weak point in today's society (see UMR, April 12).

The current concept among the general public that it is a violation of the separation of church and state for a candidate for office, or a public official, to do more than state he is a Christian in an offhand manner is a direct result of decades of attack on the Christian by the national secular media.

No one forces any candidate for office to put a church affiliation on campaign literature. When it is there, it is present because the candidate expects to get votes from it.

Consequently, that candidate should be held responsible for the known moral standards of the named church. Our failure to do so in the past couple of decades is, in part, responsible for some of our problems today at all levels of government.

As voters, we need to seriously consider the implications of a candidate who states he is a member of a specific church, and of a candidate who fails to state the church to which he belongs since he may belong to no church.

Howard Lydick
Richardson, Texas

An alternative suggestion

I would like to respond to James Lansdowne's provocative "Here I Stand" column in which he urges United Methodists to support Palestinian rights by ceasing to sponsor or lead group tours to Israel until the Occupied Territories are returned to the Palestinians (see UMR, April 19).

I heartily support his concern for justice for the Palestinians. I would, however, offer an alternative suggestion regarding church-sponsored tours.

As again conveyed to me in a visit to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth this April, the Christians of Israel and Palestine are desperate for visits of support and concern from Christian pilgrims.

They noted that when the Scud missiles began to fall, American Jews came to be in solidarity with Israeli Jews; but no Christians came to be with the Christians of Israel or the Occupied Territories. Furthermore, visits can provide those of us from the outside unparalleled opportunities for personal relationships and first-hand understanding.

Therefore, I would urge United Methodists to resume pilgrimages to Israel/Palestine—but only on the condition that a significant portion of the program time, say, at least 20 percent, is spent getting to know our fellow Christians and their deep concerns for justice and peace.

A UM missionary serving in Jerusalem, Romeo del Rosario, is eager to facilitate this process and can be reached at P. O. Box 1248, Jerusalem 91019 via Israel or faxing at 972-2-273847.

George D. McClain
Staten Island, New York

So who's greedy?

I write to you about the editorial in the April 19 issue concerning young Bryan Wrzesinski.

I am a bit concerned about the greed of young Bryan, but I am far more concerned about the greed within our own United Methodist churches and the public in general when it comes to baseball.

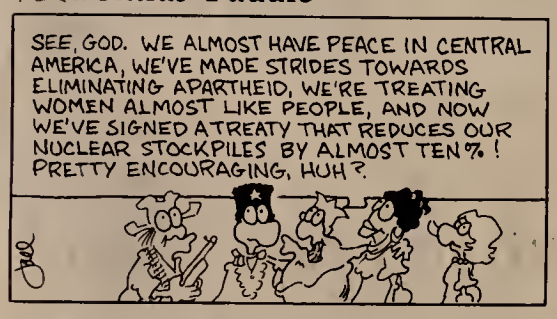
As a retired and still active pastor, I have been approached by the UMW ladies with chances on a quilt ("for a good cause, it isn't gambling—or can we call it covetousness as it should be!").

On a trip south for a seminar, I stopped on the Lord's day in South Carolina to find in the church bulletin that the ladies of the church were chancing off a quilt for missions (missions?!). The worst part of this event was that the church was named after our founder, John Wesley!

Our churches continue to have bingos and cake-walks at their summer events. If I do not mis-read Scripture, it is still covetousness and greed that have us putting up less money than something is worth, just to get more than we deserve.

Edgar W. Roberson, Jr.
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"The music of faith is portable. It can be carried into many places to assist in the healing of mind, body and soul."
—The Rev. Delton Krueger, director, Minnesota Conference Council on Ministries

* * *

"It is not enough for people to abolish evidence of hatred. We must be pro-active—put on the signs and symbols of our Christian conviction. We are pretty clear about what we do not do. We are not as clear about that which we should do."
—The Rev. Gilbert Caldwell, district superintendent, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

* * *

"Stupidity is a sin when it's a willed and studied stupidity, a practiced obtuseness that is insensitive and unreceptive to the cries of the oppressed and the testimony of their honestly concerned neighbors."
—Dr. Ralph Blair, Evangelicals Concerned

* * *

"A local church is a laboratory for learning, growing, discovering, risking and even failing. The leaders and members must be open to God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and willing to respond to the nudging, calling, prodding and leading of the Trinity in their personal and corporate lives."
—The Rev. David E. Jelliff, Western New York conference staff.

* * *

"A 'pure' Christian isn't someone who has never had a bad thought in his life, but someone who interprets life purely, single-mindedly, in the light of what he has seen in Christ."
—United Methodist Bishop Ben Oliphint, Houston Area

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every one who loves the parent loves the child." (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: 2 John 6)

Readings for week of May 13

Monday: Psalms 1
Tuesday: Psalms 2
Wednesday: Acts 1:6-14
Thursday: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26
Friday: John 17:1b-19
Saturday: John 17:20-26
Sunday: 1 John 5:9-13

The United Methodist REPORTER

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith watch

CHRISTIANS TO PROTEST KKK: A group led by United Methodist pastors plans a silent protest to a Ku Klux Klan information distribution set for May 25 in Duncan, S.C., according to the Rev. James Hunter, area superintendent. A Klan group says it will hand out literature in support of high school students' right to display the Confederate flag on school grounds. Mr. Hunter said, "We do not want to agitate anybody. We simply want to say we stand opposed to the Klan and its ideology."

U.S. CALLED TO LOVE: U.S. Christians' "new world order" needs to be based on justice, sharing, and love, said Gabriel Habib, chief executive of the Middle East Council of Churches. He told an ecumenical conference on the Middle East, sponsored by the National Council of Churches, in Stony Point, N.Y., last week, that U.S. church leaders' opposition to war in the Gulf and concern for humanitarian issues projected an "authentic image of Christianity" to those in the Middle East.

Gabriel Habib

ORDINATION IN DISPUTE: Disciple Renewal, a seven-year-old faction within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), opposes "the ordination of practicing homosexuals to the ministry," according to Kevin Ray, executive director. The group's statement was issued because of the proposed ordination May 19 of Allen V. Harris in the Disciples' Northeastern Region. Mr. Harris is editor of "Crossbeams," the newsletter of the organization Gay Lesbian Affirming Disciples.

FAMILY WORKERS NAMED: The National Council of Churches recently commissioned 61 blacks in Chicago as black family ministry consultants. Drawn from congregations and seminaries of 10 mainline and historic black churches, the consultants are to work with congregations to develop programs to meet needs of black families across geographical and denominational boundaries.

BAPTISTS 'SATISFIED': After a recent study of the denomination, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board said 65 percent of the 1,400 adults surveyed said they were at least "somewhat satisfied" with the denomination. Further, the board said, 66 percent said they would "feel a great sense of loss" if they had to change churches. Respondents said the presence of friends or family in a church was the top reason for going to church where they do; denominational loyalty was the No. 2 reason.

MISSIONS BUDGET STALLS: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) over the next three years expects that giving to missions will not increase, according to a spokesman for the denomination's General Assembly Council. S. David Stoner, council executive director, said among responses to the budget news was the indefinite extension of a hiring freeze on General Assembly-level staff positions.

BIBLE: ACTUAL 'WORD'?: In a recent survey, 49 percent of Southern Baptist respondents said they believe the Bible is "the inspired word of God" and that "some verses are to be taken symbolically rather than literally." Another 35 percent said the Bible is "the actual word of God and is to be taken literally word for word." Eleven percent said the Bible is the inspired word of God but "may contain historical and scientific errors." Two percent said it was not inspired by God, 1 percent said it is a book of human fables and legends, and 2 percent did not respond.

ALL-CHURCH MAILING: A 550-member church in Cookeville, Tenn., is trying to raise money to send an evangelistic brochure to every household in the nation—all 102 million of them. The Sycamore Church of Christ has raised $5.2 million of its $9.9 million goal, mostly from small donations from Church of Christ members across the country. Called "One Nation Under God," the effort is using a direct mail organization to distribute the brochures. They are slated to go into homes in early July.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Missionaries help fight cholera's spread

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

United Methodist missionaries and members of the autonomous Methodist Church of Peru are trying to help stem the spread of cholera in Latin America.

The epidemic, which started in January in fishing ports of northern Peru, reportedly endangers the lives of more than 120 million people in Latin America. It has claimed more than 1,000 lives in Peru alone.

Some 57 United Methodist missionaries serve 18 mission areas in South America (see map).

The disease is striking Ecuador, Colombia, northwestern Brazil and Chile. Cases have been reported as far south as Santiago, Chile.

More than 175,000 cases have been reported, most of them in Peru, a country of 22 million people.

People suffering terribly

"People here are suffering terribly," the Rev. Justin Fisher told the Reporter by telephone interview from Lima, Peru.

Mr. Fisher, a native of Indiana, is a United Methodist pastor of Union Church of Lima, an English-speaking congregation of United Methodists and other members of mainline Protestant denominations.

To complicate matters, he said, massive strikes by medical workers have made it difficult for the most vulnerable portion of the population, those in extreme poverty, to get medical care.

Members of his church have been working in Pueblo Jovenes, the poverty stricken shanty towns of some 9 million people that surround the city, delivering medicine and setting up sanitary food kitchens, he said.

Members are also funding construction of school bathrooms, which were nonexistent in the poorer areas, he said.

Horrible conditions

Sanitary conditions in which these people live have been described by health authorities as "truly horrible."

The only United Methodist missionary in Peru is Jean Jacobs. Ms. Jacobs is an administrator at Colegio Maria Alvarado, a school in Lima that was founded by the Women's Society of Christian Service (a forerunner of United Methodist Women).

"School started," Ms. Jacobs told the Reporter, "right in the middle of the cholera epidemic."

Children and their parents were taught the necessity of boiling their drinking water and of eating only cooked meats and vegetables, she said.

Children studied about the disease in the classroom then went into the community to help deliver information about disease prevention techniques, Ms. Jacobs continued.

"The disease has spread rapidly among the very poor for two reasons," she said—"they don't have water in their homes, and the cheapest source of protein is fish from the contaminated areas."

Ms. Jacobs and other sources say another problem is that the national dish of Peru is Ceviche—raw fish prepared with lemon juice and hot pepper. The dish was widely available from street vendors subsequently banned by the government for lack of proper sanitation.

An active member in the Methodist Church of Peru, Ms. Jacobs said her church raised money for rehydration kits to treat cholera victims.

Many Peruvian Methodist congregations are participating in the national campaign to increase disease-preventing personal hygiene and sanitary practices, according to the Rev. Rosanna Panizo.

Ms. Panizo is the rector of Biblical Theological Community, a seminary sponsored by the Methodist Church of Peru.

"All seminary students are working with congregations in Lima," Ms. Panizo told the Reporter, "and they are working in their own communities to help with the sanitary campaign to prevent the spread of cholera."

Epidemic spreading in two directions

Some 57 United Methodist missionaries serve 18 mission areas in South America which is threatened by the worst cholera epidemic in this century. The disease started in Peru in January and has spread to Ecuador, Columbia and Chile. The Amazon River basin in Brazil is threatened.

PHOTO BY KATHY KRUGER NOBLE

ANDOVER, Kansas—A young man identified only as Darryl tries on shoes at a clothing distribution site in Andover United Methodist Church. He lost his mobile home in a tornado last month. Officials said hundreds poured into the church for clothing, supplies and spiritual guidance.

UMCOR helping relieve U.S., global crises victims

Reporter Staff Special

Responding to the needs of people around the world, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is helping people recover from disasters through your gifts to the Advance for Christ and His Church:

Emergency Domestic Response, Advance No. 901670-1. Gifts will assist victims of recent tornadoes and flooding in Louisiana, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Kansas (see related stories on this page).

Latin America Cholera Epidemic, Advance No. 982450-8: United Methodist missionaries are helping fight the cholera crisis (see story above). UMCOR has given $43,000.

Bangladesh Cyclone, Advance No. 202400-6. News reports on the cyclone that hit Bangladesh indicate 40,000 to 100,000 dead.

The Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh—in cooperation with the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A.—has sent a team to survey the affected areas. Initially, UMCOR has sent $100,000 to provide clothing, cooking utensils, food, blankets, water purification tablets and temporary housing.

Costa Rica/Panama Earthquake, Advance No. 507400-7: The 7.4 earthquake that shook Costa Rica and Panama April 22 left at least 40 dead in Costa Rica, 350 wounded and 10,000 homeless, according to the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization.

UMCOR has supplied food for over 20,000 meals and 50 drinking water storage containers and has ordered food supplies for 40,000 additional meals expected to be shipped on May 4.

Gulf Crisis, Advance No. 601740-2: The Middle East Council of Churches has appealed to churches around the world to provide relief assistance to Persian Gulf-war Iraqi refugees—mostly Kurds—in Turkey and Iran. UMCOR has given $80,000.

International agencies have provided the council's churches with high protein food, medicines, blankets, mattresses and tents.

Soviet Georgia Earthquake, Advance No. 250200-8. Gifts to this fund will aid last week's earthquake victims in the Soviet republic of Georgia.

Liberia Emergency, Advance No. 150300-7: Church World Service reports that a particular concern is meeting spiritual needs of orphans and street children, helping them to deal with the traumas they've endured in this nation's civil war.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Tornado cleanup effort finds hub in UM church

By B. DENISE HAWKINS
United Methodist News Service

Mounds of sorted, used clothes fill nearly every inch of the Andover (Kan.) United Methodist Church, including the children's Sunday school room, says Pat Headley, a member of the church.

The clothes bank operated by the church for more than six years became the hub of community relief efforts for those left stranded and devastated by furious storms and tornadoes that ripped through Kansas April 26.

Scores of tornadoes were also reported in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Alabama.

Soon after tornadoes disrupted the small bedroom community of Andover, hundreds of families began pouring into the church for clothing, household supplies and spiritual guidance, Ms. Headley said in a telephone interview from the church.

Ms. Headley said donations of household furniture, diapers, cleaning supplies and toiletries are desperately needed.

She praised cooperative efforts of the town's religious community to provide immediate relief to victims of the storm:

"We are a close-knit community. Our concern here at Andover is not just for others in the denomination."

At least 19 persons—four of them United Methodist—were reported dead and others injured in the Kansas area disaster. Forty homes were destroyed.

Preliminary reports from church officials in Kansas and Oklahoma indicate little or no church property damage.

Denominational relief efforts began early.

The Rev. Wayne Jarvis, a volunteer consultant with the United Methodist Committee on Relief, arrived in Kansas April 29.

A church and community worker from UMCOR will be stationed in the city to coordinate long-term relief efforts, said Virginia Miller, director of domestic disaster relief efforts for UMCOR.

Kathy Kruger Noble, editor of the Kansas West edition of The United Methodist Review, contributed to this report.

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*Cost includes registration, hotel, course and workshops, excursions, in town transportation and meals.

School leveled, classes continue in churches

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

A killer tornado ripped up the county's high school this spring, but to the church people in a small Tennessee town that didn't mean school was out.

"I know it sounds strange, but it's been a good experience . . . after the tornado, of course," a pastor said.

After the tornado blasted an area about 80 miles east of Memphis, churches in the town of Adamsville reached out, together, for the first time, in Christian witness, said the Rev. W. Kent Bailey, pastor of First United Methodist Church.

Churches were among the first to organize rescue, relief and food efforts.

And, because the high school was blown into oblivion, the three churches, with their Sunday school classroom facilities, became the obvious place for classes to be held.

The "Jackson Sun" newspaper reported that the storm claimed four lives, injured as many as 100, and did more than $1 million in property damage. It destroyed 16 homes, damaged another 95 and stayed on the ground over an unusually long distance, a dozen miles from Selmer to Adamsville.

Mr. Bailey said another $1 million damage was done to the McNairy County High School, where the new football field and stadium were twisted to pieces.

Further, he said, it's not possible to estimate the costs of the lumber-rich area's 200,000 hardwood trees splintered by the raging winds.

"We don't know how much harm that will do to the logging businesses or what the environmental impact will be," Mr. Bailey said.

High school students are finishing the school year with classes in the Church of Christ, the Baptist church and the United Methodist Church in Adamsville.

"The schools are covering all the overhead costs," Mr. Bailey said.

Things do come up, he said, such as the day a funeral was held at First United Methodist Church.

"There were 180 teens in the back yard of the church eating lunch very quietly so the funeral could go on in the sanctuary.

"The students in all three churches have been just wonderful.

"Teachers say that since the classes are meeting in the churches, the students' grades have gone up and their general attitudes have improved."

Mr. Bailey said he finds that "our faith in God remains strong."

The Rev. David P. Comperry, pastor of First United Methodist Church of Selmer, Tenn., said that church people there also leaped into the rescue and rebuilding efforts.

One way his church was able to help, Mr. Comperry said, was through the stewardship of foresight.

"A tornado hit this community back in the 1970s, and a disaster fund was started. As a result, we've had $5,000 to try to meet the needs that haven't been met by the other helping agencies."

Faith connections

PREACHING CHAIR: The Rev. Thomas H. Troeger, a Presbyterian, has been named to the Ralph E. and Norma E. Peck Chair of Preaching and Communication at UM-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver, effective June 1. Dr. Troeger is the first person appointed to the chair established in 1989 from the Peck estate. Dr. Troeger, professor of preaching and parish ministry at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, is also a noted lyricist with a number of works in denominational hymnals, author of 10 books and editor of a new series, "Imagination and Preaching," to be published by Abingdon Press.

SECRETARIAT COMPLETE: Staffing of the revamped general secretariat of the United Methodist General Commission on the Status and Role of Women was completed recently when the Rev. Stephanie Hixon of Lewistown, Pa., was elected. She will join Cecelia M. Long, a secretariat member since 1989, who was re-elected. Previously the commission had a three-person secretariat. Ms. Hixon has been pastor of First United Methodist Church in Lewistown, Pa., since 1989, and has held a number of Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference responsibilities. A special interest has been music therapy. Her election is effective July 1.

Ms. Hixon

MISSION STATEMENT OK'D: Directors of the General Board of Global Ministries adopted a statement during their recent meeting that spells out the theological basis for the board's mission evangelism committee. The three-page document, "Towards Mission Evangelism for the 1990s," also identifies the goals and strategies of the committee, including developing ways to share the Gospel in situations in which the "Christian gospel has not been heard or heeded." The board created the committee in 1988 in response to criticism that it did not encourage missionaries to proclaim the Gospel in mission situations.

DIALOGUE CONTINUED: General Board of Global Ministries directors want the next meeting between representatives of the board and of the unofficial Mission Society for United Methodists to focus on two topics: using criticism of the board by the Mission Society for fund-raising, and reported conflicts in mission field involvements. They also agreed at their April 14-18 meeting to stop formal dialogue with the Mission Society if no measurable progress is made in the next session. The dialogues were initiated by the 1984 General Conference in response to tensions resulting from creation of the Mission Society that same year as an alternative mission-sending agency.

COVENANT APPROVED: A "Joint Statement of Mission Covenant" between the United Methodist Church and the Korean Methodist Church was approved recently by the UMC's General Board of Global Ministries. The statement resulted from a consultation this winter that renewed a series of UMC-KMC consultations held since 1968. The 1991 covenant requires the Korean church to consult with the UMC before initiating ministries in the U.S. and similar consultation by the UMC with the Korean church before initiating ministries in Korea.

Bishops' 'mosaic' looks to 21st Century

Vital congregations, ecumenism, models for ministry top leaders' agenda

BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

JACKSON, Miss.—Like artisans crafting an intricate mosaic, United Methodist bishops struggled last week with unfinished components that will help form the church's identity for the 21st Century.

Many proposals the bishops considered during their semi-annual meeting April 30-May 3 will come before the church's highest legislative body, the General Conference, in Louisville, Ky., one year from now.

Tops among the bishops' concerns were the growing impact on local churches in the "Vital Congregations-Faithful Disciples" church revitalization initiative which the bishops unveiled last fall (see story below) and United Methodism's ecumenical involvement.

Another high priority for the bishops was debate over the administration of a proposed new model of ministry for the church.

This model was presented by Ruth A. Daugherty of West Chester, Pa., chair of the 35-member committee studying the United Methodist ministry.

The committee's model calls for a new lay order of consecrated deacon and a one-step process for entering the ordained ministry instead of the current two steps.

The ministry study panel's proposal was endorsed strongly in a special address presented by Bishop Bruce P. Blake (Dallas Area), representing himself and the other four bishops on the study panel: C. Dale White (New York Area), Roy I. Sano (Denver Area), Joseph B. Bethea (South Carolina Area) and Emerito C. Nacpil (Philippines Area).

Apparently as a result of the five bishops' endorsement, the full council debated primarily how to make the proposal work rather than whether it is an appropriate model for United Methodist ministry.

Bishop Blake told the Reporter later that he was elated by the bishops' discussion. The council will respond officially to the proposal at its fall meeting.

Among other actions the bishops:

■ Heard a report on a denominationwide health insurance plan proposed by a task force of the General Board of Pensions. The plan, if adopted by the 1992 General Conference, would provide uniform health insurance coverage for United Methodist clergy and lay church workers and would help annual conferences slow down rampant rate increases that are devastating church budgets nationwide.

■ Criticized a draft of a new United Methodist understanding of the meaning of baptism as "more a new understanding of church membership than of baptism."

■ Criticized the proposed $3.1 million cost for a 1993-96 national plan for Hispanic ministries.

■ Submitted their pledges for the $10 million endowment campaign for Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

■ Conducted a "consultation on racism" to devise ways to foster cross-racial pastoral appointments, sharing of church facilities by congregations of different cultures, more racial diversity among faculty and students at United Methodist theological schools, and more racial inclusiveness in the mainstream of United Methodist decision-making.

Latest word on UM revitalization: It's working!

Reporter Staff Special

JACKSON, Miss.—Here's the latest word on the bishops' initiative for revitalizing The United Methodist Church:

It's working!

Members of the Council of Bishops reported last week that enthusiasm for the revitalization program, known officially as "Vital Congregations-Faithful Disciples," is growing among local United Methodist congregations across the United States.

Bishop C.P. Minnick (Raleigh, N.C., Area), chair of the episcopal initiative, reported that 70,000 copies of the bishops' study document have been purchased.

The document was introduced last fall when the bishops unveiled their initiative at the "International Gathering" in Fort Worth, Texas.

The document has been commended to local congregations for study and use in planning mission and ministry.

At Bishop Minnick's invitation, several bishops reported on the progress of the initiative in their respective episcopal areas.

Bishops Jack Tuell (Los Angeles Area) and W.T. Handy (Missouri Area) reported that 1991 sessions of annual conferences over which they preside—California-Pacific and Missouri East/Missouri West respectively—are to be patterned after aspects of the "International Gathering." This, they said, will bring the revitalization experience to more local congregations.

Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area) told of four students who have developed a "Basic Training for Christians" manual as their doctor of ministry project at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. The four have agreed to be local-church consultants for the West Virginia Annual Conference, he added.

Capping the reports, however, was one by Bishop William B. Oden (Louisiana Area).

In response to the "Vital Congregations-Faithful Disciples" call, the Louisiana Annual Conference held 27 listening posts that drew 1,800 people to comment upon local congregational needs, annual conference expectations and the study document.

Each Louisiana congregation has established a "Vision 2000" committee to set up new mission goals, Bishop Oden said.

The effort culminated in the recent Louisiana "Gathering" in Baton Rouge, La., attended by 11,000 United Methodists representing 586 of the conference's 612 local congregations.

"A [spiritual] fire has been built in Louisiana and we hope to continue it for the coming decade," Bishop Oden concluded.

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

WHITE HOUSE PHOTO FROM UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE

CAMP DAVID, Maryland—United Methodist layman Kenneth Plummer Sr., lectern at left, presents the Camp David Chapel at the famed presidential retreat near Washington to President Bush, lectern at right, for dedication as a gift to the nation from "people of faith." Under Mr. Plummer's direction, the chapel was completed from private donations.

Glow of hospitality greets bishops across Mississippi

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

JACKSON, Miss.—Torrential rains on April 28 couldn't keep Mississippi from burning.

But unlike the fires of racial hatred that flared 25 years ago, the glow of hospitality lit United Methodist congregations welcoming 45 visiting bishops who were invited to preach.

Bishop Robert C. Morgan (Mississippi Area) told the Reporter he organized the episcopal visits "so that folks could see what we're really like today" in contrast to the state's dark, lamented history as a bastion of racial segregation and intolerance.

Mississippi's April 28 downpour forced cancellation of a fleet of 11 private planes that Bishop Morgan had organized to fly bishops around the state to their host congregations. Especially hard hit was the Mississippi Delta area along the Gulf of Mexico.

But despite the cancellations, "there was a spirit of excitement" about the event, Bishop Morgan said.

The invitation to preach held special significance for Bishops James K. Mathews (Albany, N.Y., Area) and Woodie W. White (Illinois Area).

On Easter Sunday 1964, Bishop Mathews attempted to worship at Galloway Methodist Church in Jackson, Miss., in the company of Bishop Charles Golden of Methodism's racially segregated Central Jurisdiction. The two were ejected from the church.

On April 28, Bishop Mathews preached to an appreciative, racially diverse Galloway UMC congregation that included Mississippi Gov. Ray Mabus.

"Believing in the communion of saints as we do, I'm sure that Bishop Golden was looking on [from heaven] in great interest," Bishop Mathews said.

Bishop White, meanwhile, was preaching at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Jackson, where he was arrested 27 years ago during a civil rights demonstration.

"Preaching there was a good experience, like finishing an unresolved chapter in my life," Bishop White told the Reporter.

"My memories of that church had been of being arrested, but now I have another memory of a church luncheon where people greeted me warmly.

"It was as normal as being in my own episcopal area."

Both bishops said they did not mention their previous rejections by the congregations they visited.

"If there were people there who remembered my arrest, my visit might have brought some closure for them, too," Bishop White said. "I'm so grateful for the opportunity."

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Reporter wins 2 top awards in international competition

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

ST. LOUIS—The United Methodist Reporter last week received two top Awards of Merit in annual competition sponsored by the Associated Church Press.

A full-page report published June 1, 1990, won the judges' award for best reader response among entries submitted by ACP-member newspapers and magazines in the U.S. and Canada.

The report, written by Associate Editor Cynthia B. Astle, told how a near-record number of Reporter readers responded to the newspaper's survey on inclusive language.

The judges wrote, "The winner not only succeeded in getting 7,043 readers to respond to the four-question survey form, but she was able to present the results to the readers in a most readable fashion. Outstanding job."

In the newspaper category, the Reporter won the top award for in-depth coverage of a current issue.

Regarding a two-page special report published May 25, 1990, the judges wrote, "These articles describe the problem of the mounting costs of health care and what that means to congregations in the United Methodist Church. The writing is lively with a number of [secondary story] sidebars addressing different aspects of the issue. Informational graphics help show the severity of the problem visually."

Ms. Astle and Associate Editor Don Donato were principal writers of that special report.

Mr. Donato also won an honorable mention from the Associated Church Press for his news story on the escape from the Liberian civil war by United Methodist Bishop Arthur Kulah. The story, published Oct. 26, 1990, was headlined "The Lord is still performing miracles."

Two other United Methodist publications won honorable mentions in the ACP competition.

"Circuit Rider," the magazine for United Methodist clergy, won in the magazine category for an in-depth report titled of "Abortion: A Question of Life."

"Weavings," a devotional magazine published by the church's General Board of Discipleship, won in two categories: For a devotional/inspirational article titled "Hints, Signs and Showings: The Compassion of God" by Wendy M. Wright and for magazine graphics for the magazine's November/December 1990 issue.

The association announced two all-time highs at its 1991 meeting: Membership exceeding 200 publications and more than 800 entries in the annual competition.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

ME 137 NUMBER 51 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 MAY 17, 1991

The Effective Pastor

One of the most significant meetings each year in United Methodism is made up of all District Superintendents in their third year of office. In a report of this recent event, a major theme was "The Effective Pastor." The following "vignettes" were lifted up to help describe effective pastors:

Characteristics of Effective Pastors

They work.
They are prophetic in dealing with real issues in life.
They do not lead a parade, but walk with their people.
They are affirming persons.
They are passionate people who communicate warmth and conviction whereby other people are drawn to them.
They live a balanced and faithful life.
They exercise spiritual disciplines and consistently model their basic beliefs.
They are serving and moving churches forward.

Attitudes of Effective Pastors

They have a healthy concept of servant ministry.
They are at peace with the denomination and are supportive and loyal.
They have healthy self concepts with a sense of humor and integrity.
They have the three C's approach to ministry: Committed (faith), Concerned (people), Connectional (denomination).
They overload on responsibility.
They do not see themselves as immune to normal human tragedies.
They play golf on Thursday or go fishing on Tuesday.

Support Systems of Effective Pastors

They usually have good family support.
They have enriching fellowship with other pastors.
They become mentors to others who are growing in their ministry.

Competency

They have good people skills; they love people and are good listeners.
They are not always seminary trained.

While this list comes from a "brainstorming" session of third-year District Superintendents, it is a good beginning. And each layperson can add to the list. When you do, let your pastor know!

William B. Oden

Conference Program and Agenda
Monday, June 3, 1991
Gold Dome, Centenary College
Shreveport, Louisiana

1:30 p.m. Service of Memorial and Holy Communion
Celebrant — Bishop William B. Oden
Liturgist — Rev. Helena Wright
Preacher — Dr. Fred B. Craddock
Special Music — Combined Choirs, St. Paul's and First United Methodist Church, Shreveport
Korean United Methodist Chorus, Leesville

3:00 p.m. Clergy Executive Session — Brown Chapel
Board of Ordained Ministry Reports
Report No. 1 — Committee on Conference Relations
Report No. 2 — Associate Members and Local Pastors
Report No. 3 — Committee on Training and Orders

3:00 p.m. Laity Session — Gold Dome
(Break for Dinner)

Evening Worsbip Service
First United Methodist Church
7:30 p.m.

Preacher — Dr. Fred B. Craddock
Special Music — Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder

Tuesday, June 4, 1991
Centenary College
Hargrove Memorial Theater

6:45 a.m. Sunrise Devotional Service, Board of Laity

Gold Dome

8:30 a.m. Devotional in Song — Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder
9:00 a.m. Posting of the Colors by Scouts
Organization of the Conference
Hymn —
Opening Prayer — Dr. L. Ray Branton, Host District Superintendent
Welcome — Dr. Donald A. Webb, President Centenary College
Dr. John E. Fellers, Sr. Pastor First United Methodist Church
Motions from the Cabinet
9:30 a.m. State of the Church Address — Bishop William B. Oden
9:45 a.m. Conference Council on Ministries "VISION 2000"
10:15 a.m. Recess
10:30 a.m. Conference Center
10:45 a.m. Conference Council on Ministries (continued)
Board of Discipleship
Special Ministries
Louisiana CrossLines Ministry
Commission on the Status and Role of Women
Board of Global Ministries
Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns
Commission on Religion and Race
12:10 p.m. Report from GCOM — National Hispanic Plan
12:15 p.m. Announcements and Adjournment
(Break for Lunch)
2:00 p.m. Council on Ministries (continued)
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry
Commission on Archives and History
Legislative Liaison Committee
Board of Church and Society
3:40 p.m. Town and Country Ministries
3:45 p.m. Council on Finance and Administration
Conference Treasurer and Statistician
4:15 p.m. Announcements and Adjournment
(Break for Dinner)

Service of Retirement
First United Methodist Church
7:30 p.m.

Preacher — Dr. Fred B. Craddock
Special Music — Combined Youth Choirs of the Shreveport District
Mrs. Suzanne Cate, Director
Mr. Edward Riley, Violinist

Wednesday, June 5, 1991
Centenary College
Hargrove Memorial Theater

6:45 a.m. Sunrise Devotional Service, Board of Laity

Gold Dome

8:30 a.m. Devotional in Song — Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder
9:00 a.m. Committee on the Journal
9:05 a.m. Laity Hour
Conference Board of the Laity
Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarships
1000 Club
United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women and United Methodist Youth Foundation
10:00 a.m. Committee on Episcopacy
Representative of United Methodist Publishing House
10:15 a.m. Recess
10:30 a.m. Board of Pensions
10:45 a.m. Retirees to Address the Conference
11:30 a.m. Conference Board of Trustees
11:55 a.m. Commission on Equitable Salaries
12:15 p.m. Announcements and Adjournment
(Break for Lunch)
2:00 p.m. Introduction of Persons in Special Appointments Beyond the Local Church
2:15 p.m. Representatives from Church Agencies
2:30 p.m. Ordinands to Address the Conference
3.25 p.m. Board of Diaconal Ministry
3:40 p.m. Bishop's Scouting Awards
3:50 p.m. Restructuring Committee
4:15 p.m. Announcements and Adjournment
(Break for Dinner)

Service of Ordination
First United Methodist Church
7:30 p.m.

Preacher — Dr. Fred B. Craddock
Special Music — First United Methodist Church, Alexandria Sanctuary Choir
Mrs. Sally Wood, Harpist
(Reception Honoring Ordinands in Bain Hall at the Conclusion of this Service)

Thursday, June 6, 1991
Centenary College
Hargrove Memorial Theater

6:45 a.m. Sunrise Devotional Service, Board of Laity

Gold Dome

8:30 a.m. Devotional in Song — Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder
9:00 a.m. Committee on the Journal
United Methodist Reporter
Committee on Nominations
United Methodist Foundation
Rules Committee
Louisiana Interchurch Conference
Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation
Committee on Courtesies
Where shall the next session of the Conference be held?
The Service of Sending Forth
The Fixing of Appointments — Bishop William B. Oden

A Day of Exploration
June 1, 1991
First United Methodist Church
Alexandria, Louisiana
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Have you ever felt God's "prompting" you to greater service? Have you ever felt called to full-time ministry? Do you wonder if God has something more for you to do with your life? If so, then come to "A Day of Exploration," sponsored by Bishop William B. Oden and the members of the Cabinet as well as the Conference Boards of Ordained Ministry and Diaconal Ministry. This meeting will be held as a follow-up of the Louisiana Gathering in order to give information to those who are interested in one of the many types of representative ministries.

This event will provide an opportunity for individuals to explore options for ministry through the variety of ways available through The United Methodist Church. There will be time to hear general information, as well as time to talk one to one with representatives of these boards.

Over eighty persons have thus far indicated interest in considering such a choice. If you would like to participate in this experience and have not already indicated this desire through contact with your local pastor, please write Bishop Oden's office (Bishop William B. Oden, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802) in order to register your attendance. Take the next step on your faith journey!

In Memoriam

Mrs. Rosalie Hines, surviving spouse of the late Reverend Arthur L. Hines, died Sunday, April 28, 1991. Services were held in Alexandria. Mrs. Hines was 83 at the time of her death.

• • •

The Reverend W. R. Wendt, retired minister, died Wednesday, April 24. Funeral services took place at Mangum UMC in Shreveport. Mr. Wendt was 93 at the time of his death.

• • •

Mrs. James L. (Carol) Beasley, surviving spouse of the late Reverend Beasley, died Wednesday, April 24. Services were held at Rildwood Chapel in Dallas, Texas. She was 87 at the time of her death.

• • •

Mrs. Amy Galloway Rorie, surviving spouse of the late Reverend Thomas O. Rorie Jr., died May 9, 1991. She was 98 at the time of her death.

Prestigious Awards Presented to Local United Methodists

Dr. Bob Anderson, Chairman of the Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation Award's Committee announced that the following United Methodists were presented awards at a recent meeting of the State Advisory Council of the Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation. The Foundation is a religious educational foundation organized in 1942 for the purpose of "protecting and promoting" a moral climate in the state of Louisiana.

Receiving the J. Henry Bowdon Sr. Preaching Award was Dr. George W. C. Calvin Sr. This award is named in honor of Mr. Bowdon, one of the founders of LMCF. Dr. Calvin is currently serving as the Baton Rouge District Superintendent for the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Dr. Calvin has also served as pastor of numerous United Methodist churches in Louisiana. He is recognized by many as a very powerful and articulate preacher in the area of moral and social concerns. Presenting the award to Dr. Calvin was Dr. Moses T. Jackson, a member of LMCF's Board of Trustees and pastor of Camphor United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

The W. L. "Bill" May Businessman Award was presented to Mr. Ira Woodfin. This award is named after the late "Bill" May, a well-known businessman in the Baton Rouge area and one of the founders of the Judice, Henry, May Insurance Agency. May had served a number of years as President of LMCF. Mr. Woodfin, a very active layman of First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, has received countless awards including the Baton Rouge Golden Deeds Award. Presenting the award to him was Mr. James Naylor, a member of LMCF's Board of Trustees.

Persons desiring additional information regarding LMCF's Awards Program can contact LMCF, P.O. Box 2951, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.

Dr. George W. C. Calvin Sr. is shown receiving his award from the Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation from Dr. Moses T. Jackson, pastor of Camphor UMC in Baton Rouge.

Mr. James Naylor presents Mr. Ira Woodfin, the W. L. "Bill" May Businessman Award at the recent LMCF meeting.

Editorial

Handgun law: No panacea

Here are some words not much heard during recent debates about control of handgun sales:

"Turn the other cheek."

"Vengeance belongs to God."

"Overcome evil with good."

That's no surprise. Few biblical teachings are more challenging or seemingly "out of touch" than these. Nevertheless, they help to reveal God's vision for the human race.

Namely, if humanity is to survive, its bent toward violence and "eye for an eye" justice, it must give way to a spirit of "peace and good will toward all."

Daily headlines lavishly witness to a very different reality: a society awash in physical violence, much of it related, directly or indirectly, to the use of handguns—in the streets, in homes, on campuses, in the media, ad nauseam.

Against this backdrop, the current debate about handgun control is not particularly encouraging.

In practical terms, advocates on both sides of the handgun controversy agree that current legislative proposals are unlikely to decrease handgun-related deaths by more than 10 percent.

The unregulated production and massive "underground" circulation of handguns in this country make it virtually impossible via sales restrictions alone to stem their illegal and widespread destructive use.

From a Christian perspective, we believe that some form of federal handgun sales control law is desirable. Saving even one life from unnecessary violence and death is pleasing to God.

Such a law is far from a panacea, however, and actually could be counterproductive if its enactment were to give the false impression that it does much to combat violence in our society.

In theological terms, the present handgun debate, whether conducted in the halls of Congress or in the local mall, typically stops short of posing a truly prophetic challenge to our violence-saturated society:

How can we advance toward being the people, individually and corporately, that God intends us to be—non-violent, peaceful, and reconciled to each other and to God?

As Christians, our task includes proclaiming to each other and to the world a higher standard than the civil law requires.

While lawmakers struggle to regulate handgun sales, we must struggle, with God's help, to transform hearts and minds and create a world in which weapons are not necessary.

While the world at large wearily acknowledges and accepts the specter of violence, we should pray together that God will "save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore."

While others lamely explain that "You can't legislate morality" and that moral ideals have no place in the "real world," we must steadfastly recall and remind others of moral laws, acknowledged or not, to which all are accountable. For example:

"Turn the other cheek."

"Vengeance belongs to God."

"Overcome evil with good."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Headlines lavishly witness to a society awash in the image and reality of physical violence, much of it related to the use of handguns. But the present handgun debate stops far short of posing a truly prophetic challenge to a violence-saturated society.

Here I Stand

It's OK to be a plagiarist in the service of our faith

By WILLIAM E. SALMON

Steal my stuff, please!

The concern over copying a sermon idea—or an entire sermon—from someone else grows wearisome.

The object of preaching is the conveyance of the Word of God. The listener, if their real human needs are being addressed, could care less whose words they hear.

Will the church wake up to the reality that all the words and all the music belong to all the people all the time?

Plagiarism? Indeed!

Certainly there are times and places when plagiarism is wrong. Academic research is one place. To know the source of information is crucial to the continuing dialogue and growth within a discipline.

However, outside of ecclesiastical academia, the church has evangelism and nurture as its focus.

Many sermons I read, or hear are applicable only for the moment. Most are usually not worth repeating. If I do find a word, phrase or illustration through which I can pull my life, and I can use it effectively to build God's kingdom, I'll use it.

The power of the word upon the listener is what I am looking for, not on who said it, unless this too is useful in getting the job done.

Another weariness settles over me when the topic turns to the use of the hymnal or other sheets of Christian music.

It is not that I do not appreciate that the writer/author may earn a living from writing. The greater question is, for whom is the music written? Is it created for the glory of God, or for the glorification of the writer?

It should be a forgone conclusion, that if something is written for the use in the church, then for God's sake, give it away!

The underlying issue is not integrity. The basic concern is effectiveness. As one old-timer put it, "Get'in home in the rain is what's important. Not how you get thar!"

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. William E. Salmon is director of development, Kansas Wesleyan College, Salinas, Kans., and a ministerial member of the Kansas West Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

My Witness

'How excellent is thy name'

By DAN E. SOLOMON

Council of Bishops Opening Prayer
April 30, 1991 Jackson, Miss.

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is *Thy name* in all the earth:
Creator of life, yea, even our life;
Giver of blessings, yea, even we have been blessed;
Redeemer of brokenness and sinfulness, yea, even broken sinners such as we;
Sustainer of hope and mission, yea, even we have been sustained in valleys of sorrow and pain;
Celebrant of the liturgy of new beginnings, yea, even we began again that day when we stood at your altar to say, "I profess Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior," and in Him we have reason and strength for many new beginnings.

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name and how tarnished is ours.
We have shamed the family name.
Christian often marks classification rather than a compelled community of leaveners and life changers;
United Methodist too frequently signifies the mainline decliners instead of the missionally determined;
Laity and clergy have become the nomenclature of people instead of the impassioned servants of the Living God;
Bishops sometimes means managers of multiplicity instead of servants of singularity—that Jesus is the Christ.
Lord, forgive us, for we have tarnished the family name.

O Lord, your name is excellent enough to us that we covenant afresh on behalf of peace with justice, righteousness like an ever-flowing stream and hope that is invincible.
O Lord, your name is so excellent to us that we must honor that name by lifting up the downcast and making real compassion for the suffering, saying to a world that has made peace with war: "Trust not in armaments or speedy missiles, but in the Lord of Hosts."

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name, not only in all the world, but also in our hearts!
In *Jesus' name!* Amen!

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Bishop Dan E. Solomon is the episcopal leader of United Methodism's Oklahoma Area.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Letters to the Editor

Answer to 'walk out' flap lies in the example of Jesus

In a recent editorial, you raised the question of whether it's right for Christians to "walk out," and none of the answers you subsequently published appeared to be correct (see UMR, March 15 and March 29).

I was tempted to respond, but then I remembered, "forgive them for they know not what they think."

But when an avowed United Methodist bishop provides an obviously incorrect answer ("clarification") in the April 26 Reporter, I could no longer contain myself.

No one, not even the bishop, looked to Christ for the answer. That's where the answer lies.

Christ was a minority Jewish dissident who (rightfully) disagreed with the majority and their adherence to the letter of portions of their biblical dogma.

Still, regardless of erroneous tradition, he never left his Jewish faith to establish a new religion.

He never "walked out," but was faithful even unto crucifixion.

Sam Miller
Tullahoma, Tennessee

Psalter criticized

The new United Methodist hymnal is wonderful in its expansion to include the hymns of Korea, South America, Slovakia, Native Americans and other cultures.

I am thrilled to be exposed to their music and their languages.

But, toward the back of the book are Psalms with sung responses—a throw-back to the Anglican church we sought to leave in 1739. John Wesley was popular with the common man in England because it gave him something of his own. Working people felt the Anglican church was snooty and kept them on the fringes.

In the colonies, the Methodist religion grew quickly, surpassing other sects because it was the religion of the average man, the pioneer.

That heritage is in us today, and it is the reason the more formal response sticks in our throats. We left that kind of music behind for the lovely, singable hymns of Charles Wesley.

Grace S. Druyor
St. Petersburg, Florida

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD." (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: I John 5:1)

Readings for week of May 20

Monday: Psalms 104:24-34
Tuesday: Ezekiel 37:1-14
Wednesday: Acts 2:1-13
Thursday: Acts 2:14-21
Friday: John 15:18-25
Saturday: John 15:26-27
Sunday: Romans 8:22-27

Welcome to new UMR readers in Houston

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 600 member-families of **Cokesbury United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas** (Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Houston, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor" and "Here I Stand."

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

Faithfully yours

Turning 'we can't/we must' to 'we can/we will'

Four years ago at this time, leaders across our church were locked in serious debate about the wisdom of building a university in Africa.

Spurgeon Dunnam

It was a classic "we can't/we must" difference of opinion. One side affirmed the great need for more higher education opportunity among African students, but contended "We can't afford to do it."

The other side, noting our church's 150-year mission involvement in Africa without ever establishing a church-related university, contended "We can't afford not to do it."

The "Africa Initiative," as it came to be known, was born in 1984 when United Methodist bishops Arthur Kulah of Liberia and Emilio de Carvalho of Angola noted that the vast majority of students in Africa have no opportunity to receive a college education either at home or abroad.

The two bishops appealed to the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to rectify United Methodism's historic neglect of higher education for African people.

That agency responded in good bureaucratic form: by creating a feasibility committee.

What followed, however, was anything but typical of bureaucratic stereotypes. Under the skilled leadership of Dr. F. Thomas Trotter, former chief executive of the board, the idea was widely discussed. An overall vision and plan began to take shape.

A preferred site was chosen. Possible means of financing were considered. A process for developing trusting relationships on a continent still reeling from the effects of colonialism was initiated.

By this time four years ago, a majority of United Methodist leaders probably were convinced of the need. But the feasibility of embarking on so large a new project when we already had so many other projects needing support remained a major question.

As the 1988 General Conference approached, momentum increased. Delegates, demonstrating a rare degree of enthusiasm for a general church program, overwhelmingly approved creation of Africa University, along with a $20 million, four-year goal for launching it.

That enthusiasm has continued, with first classes scheduled in 1992.

Two more milestones have occurred during the past month. More than 3,000 attended official groundbreaking ceremonies in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe during April (see UMR, April 26).

And the $10 million endowment needed for student aid was officially launched last week (see articles elsewhere in this issue).

It is good to be part of a church that is capable of hearing and responding in new ways to God's call.

It is good to be a part of a process that begins with a vision and takes concrete form because of the generous response of God's people.

Bishop Ben Oliphint is correct in calling Africa University one of the great mission projects in our church's history. It is transforming a "we can't/we must" dilemma into a "we can/we will" reality.

—*SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III*

Mr. Dunnam is Editor of the Reporter.

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Faith watch

TRADE ACCORD DRAWS FIRE: The United Methodist Board of Church and Society and the Women's Division of the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries are represented on a three-month-old coalition opposed to President Bush's plan for a free-trade agreement between the United States and Mexico. The coalition from more than 50 religious and citizen groups says the plan threatens to erode environmental safety laws and even democracy. Pharis Harvey, a United Methodist layman and executive director of the International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund, said Mr. Bush's plans for overseeing labor, human rights and the environment are "too loose, too vague and not much more than a list of promises that information would be exchanged."

SALVADORAN COFFEE TARGET: A shareholder resolution asking Procter & Gamble Co. to explain why it still buys El Salvador coffee lists the United Methodist boards of Pensions and Global Ministries among 15 co-filers (mostly religious groups) for the company's October meeting. Neighbor to Neighbor, a Central America action group, began the Salvadoran coffee boycott in November 1989 to press for an end to human-rights violations and negotiation of a peace settlement in El Salvador. Board of Global Ministries directors endorsed the campaign in spring 1990.

AWAD MAY GET VISA: The Rev. Alex Awad, a United Methodist missionary to an East Jerusalem Baptist congregation, has been blocked from returning to his pulpit in Israel. But a recent letter may clear his way. The May 1 letter came from Yossi Sarid, of the Israeli governing body, the Knesset. The two had met during Mr. Awad's Easter visit to Jerusalem. Mr. Awad, a Palestinian and U.S. citizen, told Mr. Sarid of his assignment by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and his difficulties getting an Israeli work permit. In response, Mr. Sarid wrote, "I now believe there will be no further obstacles and you will be able to fulfill your position here in Israel."

'$1 EACH FOR BRIDGE': The United Methodist Church is building Africa University in Zimbabwe (see stories elsewhere on this page), but before work on the campus can begin, a $65,000, 250-foot-long bridge is needed across the Nyagambu River so construction materials can reach the school site. The university committee of the church's Central Illinois Annual Conference wants that conference to raise the money for the bridge by seeking donations of $1 for each person in worship on an average Sunday: 65,000. The bridge is a special project of Richard Reeves, a member of Decatur (Ill.) First UMC, who is on the Africa University board of directors.

TV AD TO HELP KURDS: The United Methodist Committee on Relief recently made available to 700 television stations nationwide a 30-second public service announcement in an effort to raise money to help the Kurds and others suffering in the Middle East. The TV "spot" was produced by United Methodist Communications. The Rev. Donald E. Collier, an executive with UMCom, said a similar spot for Ethiopian relief in the mid-1980s was sent by overnight mail for $26,000. The Mideast spot, sent by satellite link, cost $5,000. All donations go for relief work. **Gifts may be sent through your local church to the Advance for Christ and His Church, Gulf Crisis No. 601740-2.**

Compiled from news and staff reports

Riot-scene pastor says 'beware anger'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A Latin American United Methodist pastor in Washington, D. C., says the church must recognize symptoms of heated anger before that anger ignites into more burning buildings and riots in Hispanic communities.

That's the up-close assessment of the Rev. Jorge Pantelis, pastor of the racially mixed Calvary/Casa del Pueblo United Methodist Church in the Mount Pleasant section of Washington. The black/Hispanic church is 1½ miles northwest of the White House.

Although police cars and buses were torched and buildings burned about two blocks from Calvary/Casa church, no United Methodist church property was destroyed and no church members were harmed, he said.

"The only thing that affected our church was the curfew, because the young people could not come to our evening classes," said Dr. Pantelis.

Nearly 23 years ago, in Mount Pleasant, blacks took to the streets to protest racial discrimination, said Dr. Pantelis.

He contends that recent riots in the nation's capital reflected the same frustrations, this time by Central Americans.

"We are dealing with problems that are more than on the surface," said Dr. Pantelis. "The church and other social service agencies need to see how we can make life more human for Central Americans in this city."

Two nights of riots were sparked by Central Americans when police wounded a Salvadoran man in Mount Pleasant on May 5. That police shooting ignited anger within the Hispanic community, who claimed they were victims of police brutality and discrimination.

Following the two nights of riots and three additional nights of curfew, the situation had calmed.

Dr. Pantelis says the issue now will be for church leaders to work with community leaders so the riots won't occur again.

Dr. Pantelis told the Reporter "the main problem for Central American immigrants is finding work.

"Work had diminished back home for most Salvadorans, because they were peasants in their country. So they came here to find jobs.

"Now most of the construction industry has diminished considerably, and that has increased the frustration."

Adding to their frustration, said Dr. Pantelis, are their illegal immigrant status, the language barrier and racial discrimination.

"In fact, the level of discrimination has increased, because they can't handle the language," he said.

As pastor of Calvary/Casa Church for the last four years, Dr. Pantelis is no rookie when it comes to ministries with Latin Americans.

Originally ordained as a member of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Bolivia, he has 27 years of ministerial experience.

His 35-member congregation supports a wealth of outreach ministries. It has a day care center with 140 children; a language program that teaches English to Hispanics as a second language, with 200 participants; an Hispanic senior-adult program and a music ministry for Salvadoran musicians called "Izalco."

The pastor also offers pastoral counseling for immigrants who have found Mount Pleasant to be "a port of entry" from war-torn El Salvador.

He says he has heard many stories from refugees on the violence in Central America and hopes to publish these experiences in an Hispanic magazine.

HOUSTON—Jonas T. and Odette Kennedy, farmers and active United Methodists from Bennettsville, S.C., receive a special award from Bishop Ben Oliphint of Houston following announcement of their gift of $100,000 for United Methodism's planned Africa University.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHN A. LOVELACE

HOUSTON—Africa University President-elect John Kurewa answers questions during a news conference preceding a gala fund-launching event for Africa University. Classes are expected to begin in 1992.

Africa scholarship campaign gets gala boost

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

HOUSTON—A husband-and-wife couple from South Carolina gave United Methodism's Africa University scholarship endowment campaign a jump start May 4—$100,000 worth, to be exact.

The gift of Jonas T. and Odette Kennedy, farmers and active United Methodists from Bennettsville, S.C., was almost two-thirds of the $155,000 raised in gifts and pledges at a gala banquet attended by more than 300 at Houston's St. Luke's United Methodist Church.

This brings the total raised for the scholarship campaign so far to about $1.6 million (see related story detailing the school's finances).

Mr. Kennedy, an expert in poultry production, is a member of the executive committee for the scholarship endowment effort.

Another gift announced May 4 came from Houston Oilers quarterback Warren Moon.

Mr. Moon is chairman

Mr. Moon, honorary chairman of the $10 million campaign, announced a gift of $5,000 from his personal "Crescent Moon Foundation," created originally to help needy students in the Houston area.

An active member of Houston's Windsor Village United Methodist Church, Mr. Moon said he intends to be a "working" honorary chairman.

The university, first for the United Methodist Church on the continent of Africa, was described by host Bishop Ben Oliphint as "the most significant mission outreach in the church's history."

Fittingly, two Zimbabweans and a retired bishop made some of the most impressive remarks of the evening.

Stanislaus G. Chigwedere, Zimbabwean ambassador to the U.S., spoke of the church as the "partner and ally" of the "enthusiastically supportive" Zimbabwean government in creating the school.

Last December the Zimbabwean government voted to create a National Council on Higher Education. The new council will be responsible for approving establishment of private universities, including the United Methodist school, in Zimbabwe.

Violet Kanonuhwa, brilliantly garbed in native cloth and matching headdress, spoke proudly of her degree from United Methodist-related Central Methodist College in Fayette, Mo., but said "how much more a degree from my own country would mean." She is working on a Ph.D. degree in higher education administration at the University of Missouri.

Support 'runs in family'

Retired Bishop Roy C. Nichols, who chairs the endowment campaign with Mr. Moon as honorary chair, said United Methodist support for higher education "runs in our family," dating to "our father in the faith, John Wesley."

Bishop Nichols said creation of the school is "part of the new world order" and noted that the school's cost "will be miniscule by comparison with one missile."

The school will open with a small student body in March 1992. The first two colleges will be devoted to theology and agriculture.

First buildings on the campus at Old Mutare in eastern Zimbabwe, where United Methodists have had a mission center for nearly 100 years, are projected for completion in 1993.

Thomas S. McAnally of United Methodist News Service contributed to this report.

Petitions focus on higher education

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

United Methodism's unofficial evangelical caucus is proposing a group of actions that could fundamentally alter the church's relationship to its seminaries and colleges if adopted by the 1992 General Conference.

Four of 17 petitions for changes in church law developed by the "Good News" caucus deal with church-related higher education.

Although seeking action by the church's highest legislative body May 5-15, 1992, the petitions were issued immediately ahead of 1991 sessions of the church's 72 annual conferences.

The Rev. James V. Heidinger II, chief executive of Good News, based in Wilmore, Ky., said he expects 15 to 20 of the annual conferences to consider endorsing the measures during their sessions in May and June.

He said some 1,000 packets of petitions were mailed recently to Good News board members and other "renewal group leaders" throughout the country.

Three of the four calls for higher education-related legislative action are first-time proposals.

One petition would reduce the number of higher education professionals within the church who could hold voting membership on the church's University Senate. The University Senate determines which schools—colleges, universities and seminaries—are eligible for financial support from the United Methodist Church.

At present, chief executive officers of United Methodist-related higher education institutions make up the voting majority of the University Senate. The Good News petition would limit their number to one-third.

Other higher-education-related petitions would:

■ Require that each seminary endorsed by the University Senate teach theology that reflects the theological task set forth in the church's Book of Discipline.

■ Require that seminary-teaching content be monitored to ensure that it "faithfully reflects United Methodist doctrine" as outlined in the Book of Discipline.

■ Change the percentage distribution of the church's Ministerial Education Fund.

The fund receives some $18 million per year in apportionments from local churches.

Under existing legislation, 75 percent of the fund goes to the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for redistribution to the church's 13 seminaries. The other 25 percent remains within the annual conferences. The "Good News" petition would change that to a 50-50 distribution.

Mr. Heidinger said this is a repeat of previous calls by the caucus for changes in the Ministerial Education Fund distribution.

The Rev. Donald E. Messer, president of United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology and president of the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools, told the Reporter that the petitions could "threaten the possible accreditation [and] academic freedom . . . of our seminaries."

When questioned about that perceived threat, Mr. Heidinger asked, "Should accreditation take precedence over faithfulness to the gospel?"

The other Good News petitions deal with such topics as responsible parenthood, qualifications for ordination to ministry, homosexuality and curriculum resource materials.

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School goal: $20 million in 4 years

United Methodist News Service

Here's the latest on financing United Methodism's proposed first university in Africa:

The church's top legislative body, the 1988 General Conference, set a $20 million goal for the 1989-92 quadrennium.

Half of that goal—$10 million—was apportioned to local churches for construction and initial operations.

The other half—the $10 million on which the recent Houston event focused—is to come from private contributions to endow scholarships.

An additional $20 million for Africa University, to be split in the same manner, is being proposed by the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for the 1993-96 quadrennium.

As of the end of March, about $4 million had been contributed by local churches to the $10 million apportioned fund. Receipts represent 87 percent of the amount apportioned, the highest performance of any newly apportioned fund in the history of the church, according to Board of Higher Education and Ministry officials.

Ann Pfisterer of Nashville, director of the $10 million scholarship endowment campaign, said nearly $1.6 million has been contributed by local churches through what is called "World Service Special Giving" in the church.

In addition, key church leaders close to the university have pledged or given an initial $306,000.

During the April 30-May 3 Council of Bishops' meeting in Jackson, Miss., 40 episcopal leaders individually contributed or pledged $32,000 specifically to the scholarship endowment fund.

Missionaries to return to Liberia

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

Six United Methodist missionaries will return to Liberia by June to assist in that country's recovery from civil war.

James and Mary Ella Brentlinger are resuming duties as administrator and nurse-midwife, respectively, at Ganta Hospital in northern Liberia, according to the Rev. Robert Fletcher, a World Division executive for the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

Two other missionaries will be sent to Danane, an Ivory Coast city on that nation's border with Liberia, to help a Liberian United Methodist pastor assist civil-war refugees.

Two additional missionaries will work in the Liberian capital of Monrovia with Bishop Arthur Kulah and other United Methodist officials.

Mr. Fletcher, who visited Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast during an April 20-May 6 trip, said the potential for a new outburst of civil war "is still great."

He added, however, that Monrovia and Nimba County in northern Liberia are secure areas.

"With the network and support system that we have, there is access in and out of these areas," he explained.

Political power in Liberia is divided between the interim government in Monrovia and Charles Taylor, the rebel leader whose followers control the remainder of the country, according to Mr. Fletcher.

With a letter of introduction from Mr. Taylor and assistance from Medecins Sans Frontiers [Medicine Without Boundaries], a Belgian medical organization, Mr. Fletcher was able to visit Nimba County.

Although he saw a number of villages that had been destroyed or that are uninhabited, he found life slowly returning to normal in Ganta.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

1993-96 BUDGET EYED: Directors of the General Council on Ministries have recommended $187.6 million be budgeted to fund United Methodist programs for 1993-96. After two attempts to lower the amount were defeated, the request was forwarded to the General Council on Finance and Administration. The comparable total during 1989-92 is $150 million. Under church law, the coordinating council sends a recommendation to the financial agency, which in turn sends a full budget proposal to the General Conference for action. The 1992 General Conference will be in Louisville, Ky.

HEALTH INSURANCE EYED: United Methodist bishops received with appreciation—but took no action on—a May 1 report on a proposal for denomination-wide health insurance for ordained ministers and lay church workers. The Rev. James F. Parker, chief executive of the church's General Board of Pensions, said the plan, in essence, would require mandatory participation by all U.S. annual conferences but would allow for flexibility of benefits while attempting to slow rampant increases in health insurance costs. The bishops' main concern was whether the proposal would cause jumps in insurance rates while cutting some benefits. The severe impact of constantly rising health insurance rates on annual conferences was chronicled by the Reporter in 1990. The health insurance proposal will be considered by the 1992 General Conference.

James Parker

REPORT NOTED: United Methodist General Council on Ministries directors spent about 90 minutes recently reviewing the controversial work to date of the denomination's Committee to Study Homosexuality. No general debate on the issue took place. The full council will consider the final study report in December. In a preliminary, non-binding vote earlier this year, the study panel voted 17-4 in favor of a draft report saying that since "a common mind" on homosexuality does not exist in the church, the practice should not be termed "incompatible with Christian teaching" as currently stated in the church's Social Principles. Study committee members will complete their work Aug. 22-25 and will forward their final conclusions to the GCOM executive committee meeting Sept. 16-17. GCOM directors have agreed that the executive committee will not vote on the report independently of the full council.

NEW STRUCTURE?: The program coordinating council of The United Methodist Church is asking for a denominationwide consultation to consider restructuring the general agencies of the church. The denomination's current agency structure was set up by the 1972 General Conference. A "feeling across the church (is) that it is time to look at the entire denominational structure," said C. David Lundquist, chief executive of the General Council on Ministries. Any structure consideration, said Mr. Lundquist, must take into account the global nature of the church and affirm its importance.

David Lundquist

NEW PRESIDENT NAMED: The Rev. Jake B. Schrum, 45, has been named the 16th president of United Methodist-related Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth, effective Aug. 1. Mr. Schrum, vice president for development at United Methodist-related Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., received his master's of divinity degree from Yale University Divinity School and completed additional work at Harvard University. He teaches the development portion of the "Harvard Seminar for New Presidents" at Harvard each year.

Jake Schrum

Compiled from news and staff reports

Bishops target 'splits' in Christian family

Three approaches to Christian unity endorsed by UMC episcopal leaders

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

JACKSON, Miss.—Family disagreements sometimes spur you to make numerous efforts at understanding and reconciliation, don't they?

In a similar spirit of wanting to reconcile the "family" of Christians, United Methodist bishops are asking your local congregation to study one of three proposals to reunite the church of Jesus Christ.

During its April 30-May 3 meeting, the Council of Bishops approved three approaches toward Christian unity:

✓ Continuing study of the "Churches in Covenant Communion" proposal of the Consultation on Church Union.

The consultation, founded in 1962, is described as "a venture of reconciliation" among nine U.S. denominations, including United Methodism.

The bishops are asking local United Methodist congregations to study the COCU covenanting document during 1993-96. Based on that study, a recommendation for further participation in COCU could go to the 1996 General Conference.

✓ Recommendation that the 1992 General Conference authorize a study on possible union of The United Methodist Church with three historically black Methodist denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal.

This study was proposed earlier this year at a meeting of bishops from all four denominations.

✓ A motion by Bishop David J. Lawson (Wisconsin Area) to open dialogue on possible "organic union" with other Methodist churches around the world and bodies such as the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area) told the Reporter that he sees all these efforts as complementary.

"We shouldn't see these possibilities as being in conflict with one another," said Bishop Grove, who is president of United Methodism's ecumenical agency known formally as the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

"I think that the unity of the church is a vision," he continued. "The vision beckons in different ways at different times. A truly ecumenical church like The United Methodist Church can pursue all these possibilities. Any one of these or none or all could come to fruition."

As a result of the bishops' action on "Churches in Covenant Communion," the agency which Bishop Grove chairs will intensify recent pilot efforts to engage local congregations in study of the document, he added.

"At every level of the church—especially at the local level—we need to remember that Christ prayed on His last night on earth that His people would be one. We can never rest until the unity of Christ's church is a reality."

Congregations may obtain copies of "Churches in Covenant Communion" from the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115. Cost is $1.25 per copy.

What best prepares a pastor? Bishops, schools draft statement

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

JACKSON, Miss.—What kind of education best trains a pastor to be effective in a local congregation?

That question lies at the heart of an advisory working paper on theological education for United Methodist clergy. The paper was accepted May 3 by the Council of Bishops.

The 2½-page paper, which took about a year to write, is intended to give United Methodist bishops and seminaries a common ground in which to discuss educational needs of the church, said Bishop Neil L. Irons (New Jersey Area), chairman of the bishops' committee on teaching concerns.

"For instance, in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, we have a meeting every four years with the bishops, seminary representatives, students, recent graduates and alumni who've been working in local congregations for a few years," Bishop Irons explained.

"We talk about the state of theological education and what might be needed to help our pastors gain the tools they need to do the church's work effectively.

"This paper will provide some stability to our discussions, so that we aren't constantly creating something new or repeating what we've agreed upon."

Bishop Irons said the paper was originated by bishops in the church's Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Representatives of the 13 United Methodist seminaries and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry also had input into its revision, he added.

During the bishops' discussion May 3, Bishop Emilio J.M. de Carvalho (Western Angola Area) pointed out that the working paper lacked a specific reference to differing theological needs of United Methodists outside the U.S.

Picking up on Bishop de Carvalho's point, Bishop Sharon A. Brown Christopher (Minnesota Area) proposed an amendment to the working paper that encouraged seminaries to include curricula exploring wider perspectives such as Asian, African, Latin American and women's theologies.

Bishops spell out criteria for effective ministry

Reporter Staff Special

JACKSON, Miss.—Here are criteria United Methodist bishops deem essential for effective ministry:

✓ "A commitment to Jesus Christ, born of experience, rooted in Scripture, informed by tradition, guided by reason and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

✓ "An understanding of the call to Christian ministry and faithfulness in fulfilling it creatively through varied forms in a changing world.

✓ "A devotion to pastoral ministry, particularly to the work of preaching and pastoral administration and care.

✓ "A passionate concern for the prophetic dimension of the Gospel, in a global context, and through ecumenical involvement.

✓ "A commitment to holistic evangelism which witnesses to the grace of God and seeks the redemption of individuals, society and all of creation."

To fully achieve these goals, the bishops recommend seminaries train students in biblical and theological studies, church history, Christian ethics, United Methodist history, polity and doctrine, and practical theology such as evangelism, stewardship, worship, pastoral care and mission.

Preaching is especially emphasized as central to the task of ministry and the work of the Church.

The criteria are spelled out in a paper on theological education received recently by the Council of Bishops (see related story above).

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Pastoral 'pep squad' gives gymnast big lift

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

When 14-year-old gymnast Meredith Sholars springs into action in national competition in California this weekend, at least three United Methodist preachers will be cheering.

The Rev. Douglas Nick Sholars, pastor of First United Methodist Church of Giddings, Texas, is her father; retired minister the Rev. John W. Morphis is her grandfather, and the Rev. J. Doug Morphis, on the staff at First United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kan., is her uncle.

Described as a "little bitty brunette," the 74-pound 8th grader has her green eyes set on the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, where she hopes to compete as a member of the U.S. junior team.

Meredith competes in four events: uneven bars, balance beam, floor and vault.

If she scores in the top 18 in the U.S. Classic in Huntington Beach, Calif., she will qualify for the U.S. Championship in Columbus, Ohio, in early June. Top scorers of the Ohio competition will form the U.S. Junior National Team

Meredith's family has supported her gymnastics since she began at age three in the gym of a family friend.

Meredith Sholars
. . .*seeks Olympic slot*

She has competed at the national level for the past year and a half.

The disciplined young gymnast trains five and a half hours each day. She doesn't eat refined sugar or drink carbonated drinks or caffeine because "they make you hyper and then they make you tired."

Meredith maintains a straight "A" average in her classes and plays flute in the Pflugerville (Texas) Middle School Band.

She lives with a Pflugerville family during the week so she can train with her coaches in nearby Austin.

During weekends at home she is active in her Sunday school class.

Anti-drug project in new phase

Reporter Staff Special

JACKSON, Miss.—Having given its initiative against drug abuse a special emphasis for 18 months, the United Methodist Council of Bishops is turning the campaign over to general agencies and local congregations to continue.

Bishop Felton E. May (Harrisburg, Pa., Area) presented his "fourth and final" report on the Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence during the Council of Bishops' April 30-May 3 meeting.

Bishop May, who was specially assigned by the council to head the initiative, noted that the anti-drug campaign will be continued by a denomination-wide "special program."

The 1993-96 program is being developed jointly by the church's four program agencies—the General Boards of Church and Society, Discipleship, Global Ministries and Higher Education and Ministry—and the General Commission on Religion and Race.

"One of the primary goals [of the special program] is to empower local congregations to become involved in education, treatment, community organizing, public policy advocacy and mission evangelism [in the effort against drugs]," Bishop May stated in his report.

The Council of Bishops adopted eight recommendations regarding the initiative. Four relate to local and regional efforts:

✓ Encourage each annual conference to send two youths to "Being My Neighbor's Neighbor," a national youth convocation on drugs, alcohol and violence scheduled Sept. 14-17 at the Carter Center in Atlanta.

✓ Encourage the use of the "Born Free, Stay Free" anti-drug curriculum in every episcopal area.

✓ Share data on the special program with General Conference delegations, annual conference councils on ministries and annual conference standing committees on drug and alcohol concerns.

✓ Encourage each local congregation to contribute to **Advance Special No. 982598-1**, which funds the anti-drug campaign.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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UM agency creates TV spot to aid Middle East refugees

United Methodist News Service

In an effort to raise money to assist the Kurds and others suffering in the Middle East, a 30-second public service announcement for the United Methodist Committee on Relief was made available to 700 broadcast stations nationwide.

The television spot, which lists an address for donations, was created and produced by United Methodist Communications (UMCom) as "an effective way to get the word out," according to the Rev. Don Collier, an associate general secretary for that agency.

All money donated will go directly to relief efforts.

"We did this as a means of reinforcing people's desire to respond to this emergency, offering them an easy way to make contributions," Mr. Collier said.

A similar spot on Ethiopian relief was created for UMCOR in the mid-1980s. "I think they brought in more money on that one appeal than had ever been the case previously," Mr. Collier added.

For the Ethiopia announcement, UMCom duplicated and distributed all the tapes by overnight mail, at a cost of about $26,000, including production, according to Collier. This time, the spot is being made available by satellite through a company called MediaLink for only $5,000.

If the public service announcement is effective, UMCom may create more, he said.

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Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

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527 North Blvd.
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Thoughts on Pentecost Season

Sunday, May 19, was celebrated as Pentecost Sunday in Christian churches all over the world.

I am still reflecting on the theme of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia, this last February. The theme was "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation."

The sharpest debate at the Canberra Assembly — almost to the point of division — was over the issue of the nature of the Holy Spirit and how to participate in the work of the Spirit in renewing creation.

One presenter, a Presbyterian theologian, Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung, danced onto the stage, lighted a fire pot, invited participants to remove their shoes in order to receive the Spirit and called on all the spirits of martyrs and the oppressed in past history. It was quite a presentation.

The other presentation by Patriarch Parthenois, a Greek Orthodox leader, tied the Holy Spirit to Christ and the Church. He concluded "there is no other way."

Patriarch Parthenois focused on the *Paraclete* — God's gift of the spirit to the Church.

Dr. Chung called for *Metonia* — change which opens our eyes to what the spirit is doing in our midst.

I want to suggest that true Pentecost involves both. The spirit is God's gift to the Church but the Church certainly has no monopoly on it.

Agnes Sanford's words are important here:

The Holy Spirit, who is the giver of the gift of healing, simply cannot be circumscribed to within the walls of a church . . . For indeed the healing Spirit of God is in the wind and the sun and in the little creeping things upon the earth and is most certainly available to the one who prays with faith — minister or layperson, man, woman or child!

William B. Oden

Peace With Justice Sunday May 26

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, it is timely that Christians study how individually and collectively we can work for peace in our world. "Our Social Creed" of the United Methodist Church pledges that "We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to freedom for all peoples and to the rule of justice and law among nations." Peace With Justice Sunday, May 26, offers an opportunity to pray for peace in our troubled world and to study and meditate upon how individually and collectively we can work for a new world order which recognizes that all people on earth are God's children.

Peace With Justice Sunday provides a stimulus to examine how we can make fuller use of alternative methods of defense. Non-violent responses are more likely to produce peaceful results since violence seems to lead to a never-ending cycle of violence.

Peace With Justice Sunday also provides a concrete opportunity to further peacemaking by a special offering. One half of the offering goes to the General Board of Church and Society, Office of Peace With Justice. From these funds appropriate materials for worship and congregational study of peace goals and methods are distributed. The money also provides study funds for missionaries on leave.

Your Conference Committee on Peace With Justice asks that you pray, study and meditate on how we can be effective peace-makers and that you contribute generously to the special offering. "Let there be peace on earth," we sing, "and let it begin with me."

Nominations for Annual Conference

The Conference Committee on Nominations has met to nominate persons to fill vacancies on Conference boards, agencies, committees and commissions for the coming year. There are few vacancies to fill in this final year of the current quadrennium.

Those nominated are:

— Mrs. Carolyn Gordon Clark, Baton Rouge District, Committee on Special Ministries
— Mr. Charles S. Eyer, New Orleans District, Commission on the Status and Role of Women
— Mrs. Linda Fox, Baton Rouge District, Board of Diaconal Ministry
— Rev. Marva L. Mitchell, New Orleans District, Commission on the Status and Role of Women
— Mr. Raymond Ross, Baton Rouge District, Committee on Special Ministries
— Mr. Douglas T. Smith, Shreveport District, Board of Discipleship
— Mr. Harry L. Stagg, Acadiana District, Committee on Special Ministries

The Annual Conference delegates will also be asked to act on nominations from various Conference Boards of Trustees and committees nominated by individual groups. These will be presented in a complete report to the Annual Conference session.

Retired Ministers Home Board Special Page is on Page 6, Page 5 in local editions.

Louisiana Disasters Prompt Quick Action

Storm damage at Billy Pomeroy Caney Conference Centre near Minden, Louisiana

Long before Governor Buddy Roemer declared parts of Louisiana disaster areas because of the bad weather, United Methodists were hard at work organizing relief efforts all over the state.

The Shreveport area, hit by record-breaking rains and driving winds over a three-week period in April, had thousands of people with flood-damaged homes and no services. Several United Methodist parsonages sustained damage and minor damages were reported at St. Luke's, St. Paul's and Broadmoor. At that point, the Reverend L. Ray Branton, District Superintendent of the Shreveport area; the Reverend Thomas Howe Jr., Conference Chairperson on Disaster Preparedness and Response (DPR); and the Reverend A. Trent Palmer III, Shreveport District Coordinator of DPR, went into action.

After a preliminary investigation of the damage by local pastors who reported on each of their communities, Ms. Judith Die, a Church and Community Worker from Nebraska, who is employed by the General Conference Board of Global Ministries, flew in to help organize and direct relief operations as part of the services provided by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

The Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Federal Relief workers, and other church and community organizations were contacted in a coordinated plan to match resources with need. United Methodists, for example, according to Mr. Palmer, handed out flyers for the Red Cross, fed volunteer workers at Summer Grove UMC, took applications for emergency aid, and helped friends and neighbors clean out their damaged property.

United Methodists in the Monroe District, which has been heavily damaged by floods, have also responded to appeals for help. The Reverend Byrl Moreland, District Superintendent, reported that flooding has been so great in the area that a complete assessment cannot be made of the damage because of the inaccessibility of property still under water.

Lawson Chapel and Hebert UMC were flooded and St. Andrews sustained major damage. For this reason, the Monroe District invited another UMCOR Community and Church Worker into Louisiana. Ms. Lisa Nichols worked with the Reverend John Downs, DPR Coordinator, and the Reverend James E. Wilson, UM Campus minister and president of Monroe Interfaith Flood Relief, Inc., to recruit volunteers to work with other relief organizations for initial help and to set up long-range programs for the aftermath of the disaster.

Ms. Nichols is also helping to coordinate resources to rebuild Camp Caney Lake. The Billy Pomeroy Caney Conference Centre near Minden was hit by toronado-force winds on April 28, destroying over three-hundred trees on the campgrounds and creating massive damage to 12 of the 17 cabins as well as to the roof of the recreation building.

After the Forest Service clears the trees, United Methodists over the state will be asked to send work teams to repair and rebuild the camp so that partial operation might possibly be achieved by the middle of the summer. Dr. Branton, who has surveyed the wind-struck camp, says that there was no insurance on the cabins. Fundraising projects will be needed to cover the cost of rebuilding.

In the Acadiana District, the Reverend J. Henry Bowden Jr., minister at First UMC and president of the Terrebonne Association of Ministers, has organized local ministers as well as his own church members to minister to those hurt by the devastating weather. He reported that the "response has been tremendous" but that the real work will be done when the national relief efforts are completed leaving the local people to do the mop-up work. Church relief, Mr. Bowden points out, "fills in the cracks" that state and federal programs miss.

Other districts in the southern part of Louisiana also sustained damage, but the losses there have not been as great. Mr. Howe, who has monitored the devastation throughout the ordeal, says he is impressed with many pastors who have broadened "their mission to the whole community." He notes that this has been a tremendous "opportunity for evangelism" and that United Methodists everywhere can take pride in the work of their Church. The money that local churches gave in March in the "One Great Hour of Sharing" campaign as well as to the Advance and other church relief agencies, for example, has come back to Louisiana directly in services. Likewise, United Methodists by the scores have been there to help.

As a member of the Mennonite Community that travels all over the world to help with disasters said, "Methodists are always there with us in the difficult situations." In the coming months as Mr. Howe, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Downs, Mr. Bowdon and scores of others continue to work with the victims of the 1991 Louisiana spring, others will know that the United Methodists were there with them too.

Summer Intern Itinerates in Louisiana

The Black College Fund, Division of Higher Education, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, in cooperation with the Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church, will again offer a student itineration program for students enrolled in black colleges historically related to The United Methodist Church. This program has been designated as the Lina H. McCord Summer Intern Program in recognition of former Black College Fund Executive Director, Lina H. McCord.

Five students will be selected to itinerate in United Methodist Annual Conference where they will promote and interpret the mission of the Black colleges of the Black College Fund. Students will participate in Vacation Bible Schools, attend church camps and address Annual Conferences.

The Black College Fund will provide students with $1,500 in scholarships payable to their colleges, $75 weekly stipends and transportation to/from Nashville. Room, board and transportation between assignments will be provided by the Annual Conferences.

The Louisiana Annual Conference welcomes Benjamin Kevin Smalls as the 1991 Lina H. McCord Summer Intern who will itinerate in the Conference June 1-9, 1991. Benjamin will be presented during the 22nd session of the Louisiana Annual Conference June 3-6 in Shreveport and will be available to share information and answer questions regarding the black colleges of the Black College Fund. He will also participate in the DCYM training following Annual Conference and will speak in several churches throughout the Conference during his stay.

Benjamin is a rising junior at Chaflin College in Orangeburg, South Carolina, and resides in Washington, D.C. where he attends Ebenezer United Methodist Church. A history major, Benjamin plans to become an ordained United Methodist minister.

He is very active at Chaflin. He is a member of the Oxford Club, Pre-Alumni Council and is a board member of the Wesley Foundation. A certified candidate for the ordained ministry, he is very active in religious life on his campus. As a high school student, Benjamin served on the Baltimore Conference Council on Youth Ministries and was elected president during his senior year.

This future minister chose Chaflin College because of its excellent reputation and the school's proximity to his home. Benjamin says that he is looking forward to his itineration this summer because, "I have a sincere interest in education and ministry in our church, especially black colleges and their relationships to the public." He also says that he is "looking forward to making new friends."

Benjamin Kevin Smalls

June 17-19

Bishops' Week to Take Place at Mount Sequoyah

Bishop Dan E. Solomon of the Oklahoma Area will be the featured speaker during this year's Bishops' Week which will take place June 17-19 at Mount Sequoyah located in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Mount Sequoyah is the South Central Jurisdictional retreat and conference center. The annual meeting is open to all interested clergy and laity.

During Bishop's Week, United Methodists throughout the eight-state jurisdiction are given the opportunity to gather for fellowship, worship and learning. Bishops, along with members of their respective cabinets attend the three-day meeting.

It is expected that discussion during the event will focus on the issues which may come before the General and Jurisdictional conferences and the roles individuals may take as church leaders.

Bishop Roy I. Sano of the Denver Area will be the guest preacher at this year's event. Music will be provided by Mary Brooke Casad of Farmersville, Texas, and Florence Simons of Dallas.

Bishops' Week is scheduled to get underway at 9 a.m. June 17 with a meeting of the jurisdiction's College of Bishops. A "hymn sing" at 7 p.m. will begin the opening session.

As guest speaker, Bishop Solomon will present the Willson Lectures at 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. June 18 and 10:45 a.m. June 19. Bishop Sano will lead worship services at 7:30 p.m. June 17, 10:45 a.m. June 18 and 9 a.m. on June 19.

Consultations and meeting with the episcopal leaders will take place on June 18. A service of prayer and dedication concludes the event 11:45 a.m. June 19.

Registration is $10. A variety of accommodations can be made at the retreat center. Space is limited. For further information, contact Pauline Abraham at Mount Sequoyah, 150 N.W. Skyline, Fayetteville, AR 72701; (501) 443-4531.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Is your God too nice?

A classic 1961 volume by biblical scholar J. B. Phillips carried the title "Your God Is Too Small."

If Prof. Phillips were writing about Christianity in the 1990s, we believe he might title his new book "Your God Is Too Nice."

To justify the change, he could point to a recent Gallup survey.

It suggested that most American Christians neither know the basic teachings of their faith nor act significantly different from people who are not Christians.

Examples:

■ The importance of "following God's will" was rated low by both Christians and non-Christians, behind happiness and satisfaction.

■ Teen-agers ranked religious faith as the "least important" personal attribute, behind patience and hard work.

■ Christians are as likely as non-Christians to engage in unethical and immoral behavior.

On the surface, these findings present a devastating indictment on Christianity.

Closer analysis, however, suggests a different problem: the endless capacity of human beings to develop distorted images of God.

According to pollster George Gallup, most Americans say they believe in God, but "this God is often only an affirming one, not a demanding one."

In other words:

"Your God is too nice."

The troubling implications of belief in a "too-nice God"—that is, a God who blesses but does not challenge or demand—merit reflection.

First, such belief is contrary to Scripture. True, the Bible reveals a God who, in covenant with humanity, bestows incomparable gifts upon us, including life itself. But it also reveals One who demands costly commitment and willingness to "take up your cross and follow me."

Second, belief in a "too-nice God" undermines Christian moral attitudes and conduct. It promotes the false idea that human beings are merely takers and not obligated also to be givers. In contrast, a bedrock tenet of Christian morality is that we are called to respond lovingly to the claims of God and the needs of others.

Finally, an emphasis only on "what God does for me," tends to turn us inward and dim our awareness of humanity's interdependence. It thus weakens our bonds to each other and threatens our ability to sustain hope for world harmony and peace.

Christians, of all people, should know that our beliefs, particularly about ultimate matters such as the nature of God and life's purpose and meaning, powerfully shape our attitudes and actions.

If we, as Christians, are disturbed—and we should be!—by surveys showing no difference between our outlook and behavior and that of non-Christians, we should look to see if we've built our faith on an undemanding image of God and suffered an ensuing failure to rejoice in God's laws and limits as well as God's love.

Letters to the Editor

Let's direct moral outrage to today's issues

John H. Emerson's "Here I Stand" column on the Columbian Quincentenary presents a rather simplistic view of history (see UMR, May 10).

Columbus' effective discovery of America represents a significant milestone in the history of the world and therefore is an occasion to be remembered.

Certainly much tragedy attended the cultural conflict that characterized the European conquest of the Americas. There was genocide and destruction of ancient civilizations. Yet much for which we now assign blame to the Spanish conquerors was done in Christian conscience.

The moral issues that concern Mr. Emerson were debated in Spain during the century following Columbus by the Dominican bishop Bartolome' de las Casas and the theologian Juan Gines de Sepulveda.

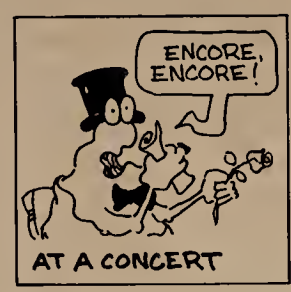
Las Casas championed the American Indian as a rational human being whose soul was to be saved, as opposed to an inferior creature to be conquered and enslaved.

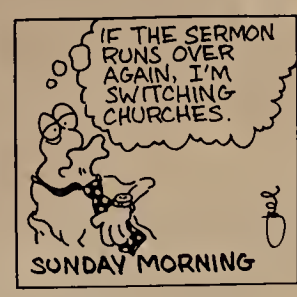
So extreme was the venerable bishop in his condemnation of the conquest that he created the legend of Spanish cruelty, which is echoed even today among those who know only a smattering of the true history.

Yet, as we approach the 500th anniversary of the discovery, perhaps a lesson should be taken from Las Casas: that we direct our moral outrage at the injustices of our own time, rather than at those of the distant past.

Robert S. Weddle
Bonham, Texas

Pontius' Puddle





Caution on Africa U.

For some time I have been following the developments of the Africa University with both interest and concern (see UMR, May 17).

I've followed with interest because I grew up and lived in Zimbabwe for over 30 years, until 1988 and immigration to the United States.

I've followed with concern, because I worked for the government of both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe for many years. I also still receive newspapers, etc., from family there.

I sincerely urge those concerned with the establishment of the university to ensure that all the "i's" are dotted and the "t's" are crossed before making commitments. Promises given even in writing may be reneged on in a socialist state without legal recourse.

New laws were passed recently that were virtually railroaded through parliament, removing the power from the vice-chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe to hire and fire staff. The new laws will also curtail academic freedom. The head of the law faculty at the university has stated his opposition to these laws and the manner in which they were passed.

It is necessary to use caution when dealing with such a large and costly project. American ideals may not always fit into Zimbabwe's socialist state, and may well be in direct conflict with them.

Debbie Alvord
Wauchula, Florida

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Here I Stand

'Petition 2493': A false prophet

By DAVID M. GARRETT

Not long ago, a member of my congregation said she needed to talk to me. We set up an appointment, and the next morning she came by my office.

She brought with her a photocopy of a chain letter she had recently received. The letter began:

"Madelyn Murray O'Hair, an atheist, whose efforts successfully eliminated the use of Bible reading and prayer from all public schools 15 years ago, has been granted a federal hearing in Washington, D.C. on the subject of (F.C.C.) (sic). The petition, H.R. 2493, would ultimately pave the way to stop the reading of the gospel on the airwaves of America. She took her petition with 27,000 signatures to back her stand."

Copies encouraged

The chain letter continued by encouraging the reader to write the Federal Communication Commission and to send copies of the letter to 10 friends and relatives.

My church member, a concerned Christian, wanted to know what I, her pastor (who should also be concerned), wanted to do about this.

Indeed, if this were true, we should do something about it. But the letter looked oddly familiar. I told the church member that I would think about what we should do and I would get back in touch with her later.

As soon as she left, I placed a call to the Federal Communication Commission in Washington, D. C. Much to my surprise, the automated answering machine was waiting for my call: "If you are calling in regard to H.R. 2493 . . .

According to the recorded message, Ms. O'Hair did file such a petition with the FCC in 1974. In August of 1975, H.R. 2493 was denied by the FCC, and no further consideration was given Ms. O'Hair's petition.

FCC takes neutral position

The FCC takes a neutral position in regard to religious broadcasting, neither promoting it nor discouraging it.

Unfortunately, this chain letter continues to circulate among Christian groups. Since 1975, the FCC has received over 30 million pieces of mail regarding the 16-year old petition.

I called my church member and asked for her help in breaking the chain. But about two weeks later, another concerned member received a copy of this letter from a friend of his. Alas, once started, chain letters are nearly impossible to stop.

This is not the only case of deception. A similar chain letter is being circulated regarding a supposed Swedish film about the sex life of Jesus Christ. Another chain letter warns of a supposed secret link between Procter & Gamble and a Satanic cult. Both are untrue.

Most often when we read such things, we let our emotions flare up and we do not take the time to "test the spirits" as Paul warns us to do (1 John 4:1).

There are many false prophets in this world speaking in the name of the Lord. We must be constantly on our guard and educate ourselves to question and test the spirit, and determine whether it is a spirit of truth or just the vain babbling of false prophets.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. David M. Garrett is minister of The United Methodist Church, Barlow-Wickliffe Charge, Barlow, Ky. (Memphis Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What others are saying

"In a genuine dialogue among Christians we must believe there is a reality who binds us together despite our differences, a Christ in whom we are tethered to one another in such a manner that we cannot 'write off' the other person."

—The Rev. George W. Stroup, professor of theology, Columbia Theological Seminary

My Witness

Separating is at times the loving thing to do

By WELDON S. CROWLEY

The timing was right.

She was in her apartment, beginning her senior year of college, making progress in the work that held promise of a long-term career opportunity.

In so many ways, Lisa had "hit her stride" and Abbey was to join her in this new stage of life.

Both Abbey and Lisa were loved and loving. They wanted and needed each other, though, as it turned out, in dramatically different ways.

Abbey's love was unconditional—and as appropriate as that may seem—was too consuming for Lisa's measured, disciplined and balanced approach to life, love and work.

Lisa tried. She fulfilled her responsibilities and gave all that was left to Abbey—and yet that was not enough. And, while Abbey did not comprehend it, Lisa's guilt grew day by day. She began to wonder if she could ever be all that Abbey needed. She decided that she could not.

It was at this point of decision-making that Lisa experienced existentially what she knew intellectually: Sometimes the loving thing to do is to separate.

There is probably no comparably mixed emotion than that insight, and in making her decision, Lisa became a woman in a full and agonizing way.

Abbey went to Pam who shared her mutual need for constancy of affection and confidence. Like Abbey, Pam was spending much of her time alone, was struggling with her emotions and needed (and could give) a virtually unconditional love. And thus they reside and it is a beautiful companionship.

And Lisa? She learned to "let go with love" and she learned that at the heart of love there is suffering, but it is the kind of suffering that creates new possibilities.

Our Christian tradition symbolizes suffering love with a cross. Lisa found the beginning of that insight in her life with, and separation from, a puppy.

"My Witness" is a forum through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Weldon S. Crowley is professor of history at Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas and a ministerial member of the Central Texas Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Faithfully yours

'Glory,' goosebumps and God's truth

When I was a child, I had an immense fascination with the Civil War, or the War Between the States, as it was always called in the South of my youth.

Cynthia B. Astle

Somehow, despite all the facts I memorized to dazzle my fifth-grade teacher and classmates, I never quite understood what the war was about.

Later in my life, I learned that the issue of slavery had split the Methodist Church of 1844. Physical evidence of that split remained downtown 120 years later, where two Methodist churches only a block apart were connected, respectively, to the northern and southern branches of divided American Methodism.

Ironically, I was fascinated by that tragic chapter in our national and church history at the same time an equally important chapter was happening all around me—the civil rights struggles of the early 1960s.

That watershed era came back to me unexpectedly during morning worship at the recent Council of Bishops meeting.

The choir of United Methodist-related Rust College, a historically black college in Holly Springs, Miss., galvanized a roomful of people with its rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

As "Glory, Hallelujah!" soared over the room, realization rose like the goosebumps on my skin:

The testament of this music, sung by young black women and men in a place where their grandparents probably wouldn't have been allowed, calls us anew to wage war against every expression of racial and ethnic intolerance that still is uncomfortably present among us.

As that historic hymn sung in the heart of Dixie showed, we have come a long way. But there still are people in most areas of the country, who lack decent food, housing, medical care, education and income because of the color of their skin.

I understand now that my task as a Christian disciple will never be complete until my church, my country and my world live in the genuine kinship to which Christ calls us, no matter what our color or language or shape.

God's truth is still marching on.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Ms. Astle is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him." (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Leviticus 19:18)

Readings for week of May 27

Monday: Psalms 29
Tuesday: Psalms 30
Wednesday: Isaiah 6:1-8
Thursday: John 3:1-17
Friday: John 3:18-21
Saturday: Romans 8:1-11
Sunday: Romans 8:12-17

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

CIVIL RIGHTS BILL BACKED: United Methodist Bishop **Melvin G. Talbert,** secretary of the Council of Bishops, was among 17 leaders from religious bodies who sent a letter May 14 to members of the U.S. House of Representatives asking them to support the 1991 Civil Rights Bill (HR-1). The leaders said they support the bill, in part because it "would overturn several regressive Supreme Court rulings" about job discrimination. They also said the bill does not require hiring or promotion quotas and said that, under the bill, numerical imbalances alone do not constitute proof of discrimination.

Melvin Talbert

TRADE BILL QUESTIONED: A proposed free-trade agreement involving the United States, Canada and Mexico is "too important to the future of all three countries to sacrifice for a quick up-and-down vote," United Methodist Bishop **Bruce Blake** of Dallas told a U. S. House of Representatives task force May 14. He is a director of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society and was testifying on behalf of the board and Interfaith Impact for Justice and Peace, a coalition of 38 national religious organizations interested in public policy issues.

INFANT FORMULA PRACTICE Infant formula marketing practices of Bristol-Myers/Squibb received both praise and criticism recently from two churchwide United Methodist agencies. In statements to the firm's stockholders meeting, representatives of the church's boards of Church and Society and Pensions commended the company's announced plans to halt giving free supplies of infant formula to hospitals and clinics in developing countries but said the time line for implementing the policy was too "modest." Also questioned was the company's practice of marketing infant formula directly to the U.S. public rather than promoting nutrition through doctors.

BLACK CHURCHES GROW: Two congregations in the Methodist tradition are among the nine black churches in the top 15 fastest-growing U.S. churches, according to Protestant church growth specialist the Rev. **John N. Vaughan** of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. The list includes **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church** in Baltimore (one-year jump from 3,000 to 4,000 in attendance). Close on their heels is **Ben Hill United Methodist Church** in Atlanta, growing steadily to 6,900 members. Mr. Vaughan cited some strategies for growth: "Some pastors are shortening their traditionally long services and have multiple services on Sunday morning. Some are building larger churches."

CHURCH CAMP DESTROYED: At least five districts in the United Methodist Louisiana Annual Conference reported extensive flood damage—some to churches and parsonages—after heavy rains and a tornado hit the state last month. After a tornado hit Camp Caney Lake in Minden, La., 12 of the 17 cabins, the recreation center roof, and 300 trees were destroyed. The Rev. **Thomas L. Howe Jr.**, pastor of Cornerstone UMC in New Orleans and director of conference relief efforts, helped districts surveying the weather damage.

FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS: At least 175 homes are reported damaged from flooding in United Methodism's Mississippi Annual Conference, reports the Rev. **Jerry Mitchell** of the Mississippi Methodist Foundation in Jackson, Miss. He and the Rev. **David Greer** of Louisville, Miss., have been supervising United Methodist disaster response throughout the state. Mr. Mitchell said farmers may not be able to plant because most of the farmland is still under water.

'HOT' REPORT GETS SUPPORT: A hotly debated Presbyterian sexuality report recently was endorsed by More Light, a Presbyterian movement that champions the cause of gays and lesbians. The report is to be acted on at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) June 4-12 General Assembly in Baltimore.

UMCOR grant goes to Bangladesh relief

Former director personally delivers aid

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

A United Methodist Committee on Relief grant helped fund an emergency team to two areas of Bangladesh most devastated by that nation's April 29 cyclone.

Norma Kehrberg, former UMCOR chief executive who was in Bangladesh May 9-11, said the emergency team was sent by the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh.

The commission is a partner with UMCOR and the National Council of Churches' Church World Service.

75,000 people aided

Aided by the UMCOR grant of $80,000, the team distributed blankets, plastic sheets, tarpaulins, lentils, flat rice, molasses, potatoes, high-protein biscuits, water-purification tablets and oral-rehydration packets for 75,000 people, she added.

Dr. Kehrberg went to Bangladesh from Nepal, where she is a United Methodist Board of Global Ministries missionary.

The Rev. Bruce Weaver, UMCOR's acting chief executive, said the agency asked her to make an assessment.

"We were extremely fortunate to have Norma Kehrberg within 500 miles," said Dr. Weaver. She gathered information "and was able to get back to us almost immediately."

UMCOR executive Kelly Miller told the Reporter that UMCOR has also sent $20,000 to the Church of Bangladesh for emergency assistance. That brings the total relief aid to $100,000.

He said additional funds are needed for the rehabilitation phase. The emergency **Advance Number is 202400-6** for the "Bangladesh Cyclone."

Bangladesh officials estimate that at least 138,000 people died as a result of the cyclone. Entire villages were washed away, and the lack of shelter, food and clean water contribute to diarrhea and hunger as major causes of death.

On May 11, Dr. Kehrberg visited the International Center for Diarrhea Disease Research in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where she reported seeing "packets of oral rehydration (formula) being made by employees to meet urgent needs." She said the center is "full of severe diarrhea cases."

"As people drink water contaminated by the sea and dead animals, it is inevitable that some of those who survived the cyclonic winds will die from diarrhea," she wrote.

More than 1,000 deaths from diarrhea have been reported and relief officials in Bangladesh fear this number may reach epidemic proportions, she added.

Personal delivery

Dr. Kehrberg herself delivered 850 oral-rehydration packets from her new missionary assignment, the United Mission in Nepal, along with 100 bottles of water-purification tablets.

She also visited with press and government officials and members of the Church of Bangladesh.

More funds will be needed to build more storm shelters, rebuild homes and create jobs, she said.

"Work in two hill tract areas recently funded by UMCOR was completely wiped out by the storm," she said.

"Fifty percent of the homes was destroyed, and the horticulture and agricultural work must be started over."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

African bishop heads council

JACKSON, Miss.—Bishop Emilio J.M. de Carvalho (Western Angola Area) prepares to accept the gavel of authority from Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp (Indianapolis Area) as he is installed as 1991-92 president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops. With him are (from left) his son, Aram de Carvalho; the bishop's wife, Marilyna (partially visible behind her husband); and Retired Bishop O. Eugene Slater of Dallas, Texas, who gave the benediction. Bishop de Carvalho is the second bishop from outside the U.S. to lead the council and the first from a developing country. Bishop Joseph H. Yeakel (Washington Area) was elected president-designate.

Mission Society discrimination charge draws bishop's response

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A renewed complaint that United Methodist bishops won't grant ministerial appointments to an unofficial mission-sending agency has fueled a heated response by at least one bishop.

The Mission Society for United Methodists recently released a statement questioning "the continued discrimination" against their group by many bishops.

The statement asked for an explanation "why and how this inequity is justified on any rational basis of Christian justice and charity in our connectional system."

The General Conference, the denomination's chief legislative body, in 1988 reaffirmed the General Board of Global Ministries as the church's official mission sending agency.

Some bishops have interpreted that reaffirmation to mean that bishops cannot appoint clergy to the Mission Society, said Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp (Indianapolis Area), immediate past president of the Council of Bishops and an outspoken critic of the Mission Society.

Main concern legal liability

Bishop Hodapp told the Reporter that his primary concern regarding appointments to the Mission Society is the question of legal liability should something happen to someone appointed as a missionary with that organization.

"Here is an organization that has the United Methodist name in it," Bishop Hodapp said. "They say that they are sending missionaries into areas where the church has never been, which is highly commendable. But these are high-risk areas.

"I'm asking, 'What kind of liability does their organization present for the United Methodist Church?' I have opinions from respected legal sources that I may be responsible if I make appointments to that organization.

"If something happens, the Mission Society isn't going to be the 'deep pocket,' the United Methodist church will be. As a bishop, I'm not going to put the church at that kind of legal risk."

Concern 'utterly absurd'

The Rev. Ira Galloway of Pagosa Springs, Colo., president of the Mission Society's board of directors, told the Reporter that the question of liability is "utterly absurd."

"For the bishop to raise that issue is just a smokescreen," said Dr. Galloway.

"Bishops make appointments to at least 100 agencies and educational institutions that are not local churches. Some of them are not even Christian. It's not the liability issue in question, it's because the bishop doesn't approve of what we are doing.

"Somewhere along the road the church is going to have to realize that there are people who are asking for our help, and we are giving it."

The Rev. H. T. Maclin, who retired recently as Mission Society president, added that a report from the church's General Council on Finance and Administration to the 1988 General Conference said there was no need to enjoin the use of the name "United Methodists" in the Mission Society's title.

"If there was anything out of line with the name, we would have heard about it by now," said Dr. Maclin.

Plan to contact bishops

Dr. Galloway said the Mission Society will contact all United Methodist bishops.

"If the present Council of Bishops executive committee will not talk to us, we will talk to individual bishops.

"Many bishops have told us they believe we are doing something significant. But they don't speak publicly about it because they don't want to risk the comments of their colleagues."

Dr. Maclin said at least four active bishops have appointed missionaries to serve under the Mission Society. They are Bishops Ernest Fitzgerald (Atlanta Area); Richard C. Looney (South Georgia Area); Thomas B. Stockton (Virginia Area) and Louis W. Schowengerdt (Northwest Texas-New Mexico Area.)

Retired Bishops Joel McDavid and Robert M. Blackburn also made appointments to the Mission Society while active bishops.

B. Denise Hawkins of United Methodist News Service contributed to this report.

NCC's new chief executive says she'll emphasize domestic issues

From news service reports

NEW YORK—The National Council of Churches needs again to become "a public voice and a witness to the society in which we live," according to its new general secretary.

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell was formally installed into that executive office May 14. The council has 32 member communions, Protestant and Orthodox, including The United Methodist Church.

Although she said she believes the council's work in international issues is important, Ms. Campbell told a news conference that she wants to bring a new emphasis to domestic issues.

She said she is counting on member churches to help fulfill the agenda.

Ms. Campbell is the second female and first clergywoman to head the NCC. The first woman chief executive was the late Cynthia Wedel, an Episcopalian.

Ms. Campbell is a minister in both the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

She was executive director of the U.S. Office of the World Council of Churches, 1985-91, and assistant general secretary of the NCC's Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism, 1979-85.

In a service at cavernous Riverside Church that was marked by a lengthy processional, several brief sermons, singing and shouts of "amen," Ms. Campbell was praised for her dedication to the ecumenical movement and exhorted to greater heights.

But well-wishers also cautioned that the ecumenical path will continue to be a difficult one for the forseeable future, full of the twists and turns that have characterized the movement for the past decade.

The Rev. Gardner Taylor, retired pastor of Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn, the featured preacher at the service, said of Ms. Campbell, "She brings to this responsibility a wisdom refined in the crucible of experience."

But he warned, too, that Ms. Campbell is taking the reins of the council at "one of the trickiest and most treacherous periods in our nation's life" and at a time when institutions, including the council, are "not only suspect but under indictment."

The Rev. Emilio Castro, a Methodist from Uruguay who serves as general secretary of the World Council of Churches, delivered a charge from the global community and cautioned Ms. Campbell and the council to distinguish the National Council from political organizations.

Joan Brown Campbell
. . . emphasis at home

"It's a place of prayer," he said. "Keep that clearly in front of the American public."

Dr. Castro also warned the council against being caught up in too many international concerns, to the exclusion of domestic issues.

"Be first of all an American—a national—council of churches," he urged.

NCC wants church input in 'new world order'

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—If a "new world order" as suggested by President George Bush is to be, U.S. churches want to have some input in its formation.

At its May 14-15 meeting, the National Council of Churches' (NCC) Executive Coordinating Committee approved steps toward a council reflection on the new world order concept, in consultation with its units and 32 member communions.

Richard Celeste, a United Methodist and former governor of Ohio, pointed out that while President Bush views the new order in terms of international law, he (Gov. Celeste) considers it to be a term for a more complex situation already occurring.

He cited economic strength of military losers in World War II—Japan and Germany—as examples of how "a nation's strength is no longer determined by its military might but rather its economic position."

Cooperation between countries is essential since a number of issues—the environment, AIDS, health care—transcend national boundaries.

"Nations acting together will become increasingly the common method for addressing tough issues that you see very close to home," Gov. Celeste explained.

And from Eastern Europe to South Africa, more and more ordinary citizens are expressing the spirit of democracy, he added.

The challenge is to get beyond dividing the world into winners and losers and making justice the cornerstone of the new world order, Gov. Celeste said.

Committee member Herbert Henderson, a United Methodist layman from the West Virginia Annual Conference, expressed concern about justice in the United States.

As a lawyer representing the family of a 42-year-old black woman in a wrongful death case, he recently learned that the monetary worth of a black woman's life is about half that of a white woman.

"We ought to have . . . actual programs to get our own house in order," he said.

Gov. Celeste agreed that the churches' biggest contribution to a new world order can be made at home.

"It's each person's reality that we have to use as a starting point in building an agenda around justice," he added.

Ellen Kirby, a Women's Division executive with the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, noted that church leaders had been talking about a "new world order" long before the President used the phrase. She said the NCC must reaffirm the biblical witness that provides the vision for such a transformation.

Belle Miller McMaster, a Presbyterian and NCC vice president, said the NCC could offer an arena for church people to have serious dialogue and reflection about the issue.

United Methodist Bishop Melvin Talbert of San Francisco, also an NCC vice president, said he believes that as a nation, "we have lost our soul," trusting not in God but in new military technology.

If the churches link together in justice, "we have a chance of giving marvelous moral leadership needed in this country at this time," Bishop Talbert said.

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

VITAL CONGREGATION: Palm Sunday this year was a more-than-remarkable occasion for the congregation of Immanuel United Methodist Church in Louisville, Tenn. On that day the congregation grew 11 percent with the addition of 16 new members. It was the largest single membership increase since Sept. 18, 1955, when 18 people were received. The 148-member congregation, in the Holston Annual Conference, has averaged about 115 people in attendance in the past month, said the Rev. **James Hankins**, pastor.

CHILDREN'S WITNESS: "God Is Always With You" was the message of a construction-paper-bound booklet of prayers written by 4th, 5th and 6th graders of Haven (Kansas) United Methodist Church to the children of tornado-ravaged Andover, Kan. The prayers were created by the Haven UMC children at the conclusion of a study on the power of prayer April 28—two days after Andover was struck by a tornado. One message, addressed "To Any Child," read: "I'm sorry your town got hit by the tornado. Is your house still standing? If not, I'm sorry. But, remember, God is with you."

NEW FINANCE OFFICER: Martha S. Cline of Bergenfield, N.J., has been elected associate general secretary for finance and administration of United Methodism's General Board of Church and Society, effective May 31. Ms. Cline, 33, has served with the American Lung Association since 1989. Active in United Methodist local, regional and national levels, she served on a 1985-88 committee to study the mission of the church and during 1981-84 was a member of the church's General Council on Ministries. She is also a member of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

DEADLINE NEARS: June 30 is the deadline for submitting manuscripts for the Laity Address to be presented to the next United Methodist General Conference, May 5-15, 1992. Fifty-five manuscripts have been received. The theme is "Ministry of the Laity: Serving God in our private lives and public responsibilities—connecting faith and action." The competition is open to all United Methodist laypeople worldwide. Limit is eight typed, double-spaced pages written in English. **Send manuscripts to National Association of Lay Leaders, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0840.**

TRAINING FOR KOREANS: Forty-two United Methodist Korean pastors and spouses participated in the first-ever U.S. training event in their native language recently at Stony Point, N.Y. The event was sponsored by the Joint Committee on Congregational Development, the United Methodist boards of Global Ministries and Discipleship and three jurisdictional Korean missions. Because of the event's success, two more are being proposed.

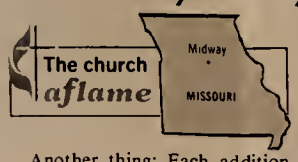
HELPING GOODWILL: A Goodwill warehouse in Uruguay will be filled soon because of efforts of 19 United Methodist churches in the Hudson West District of New York and a neighboring Pennsylvania United Methodist congregation. Working through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), they responded to a plea for children's used clothing from the Methodist leadership in Uruguay, which works with Goodwill Industries there. The Rev. **Betty Theilmann**, pastor of the United Methodist Cooperative Parish of Bloomingburg, Bullville, Manmakating and Woodridge, N.Y., coordinated the collection of clothing, hygiene items, school supplies and blankets.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Church builds its future on 'work nights' tradition

Locust Grove UMC's 'family' always lends a hand

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor



MIDWAY, Mo.—The new walls are basically bare, the new hand-made bookcases essentially empty, the new carpet slightly stained.

Only the custom-designed, hand-made window drapes make the place look lived in.

No, this isn't the home of one of United Methodism's newest congregations. Quite the contrary. It's the not-quite-finished education wing of United Methodism's oldest congregation in continuous service west of the Mississippi River.

Next year 211-member Midway Locust Grove UMC will mark 175 years in its idyllic spot three miles northwest of Columbia, literally about midway (hence the community's name) or 125 miles, give or take a few, between St. Louis to the east and Kansas City to the west.

Phrases like "Mid-America" spring to mind as one approaches the white clapboard sanctuary, bounded on two sides by the church cemetery adjoining the children's day-care playground.

Add "do-it-yourself" to the phrases. Beginning in 1830, members have built all or much of a brick chapel which yielded to the current sanctuary (1870), a lean-to add-on (1926), kitchen (1936), fellowship hall and kitchen (1951), parsonage a quarter-mile away near the main highway (1963), education wing (1965) and now the 3,000-square-foot two-level $100,000 education wing.

Another thing: Each addition was dedicated debt-free, the latest with cash left over.

When there's "church" to be built, families—two and three generations together—turn Thursday nights into work nights. And a lot more than construction gets accomplished.

As electrical contractor Virgil Koch said, "On this last job we had 12-15 people helping wire. We didn't get much wiring done but we got to know one another."

Not even the pastor, the Rev. Carol Millspaugh, escaped instruction. Volunteers' coordinator Harry Moreau taught her how to avoid hitting her finger with a hammer. The secret: "Hold it with both hands!"

The church is growing so fast—some 120 new members since Ms. Millspaugh went there six years ago—that it may be coming up on one of its toughest expansion decisions yet, one that a building campaign can't solve.

The old sanctuary, which no one wants to disturb in any major architectural way, can comfortably seat 126. Average Sunday-worship attendance for 1991 so far is 118. Some would-be visitors look in, decide the sanctuary is "full" and leave.

Adding a second worship service is one alternative. But would that split the wonderful binding of the one service, followed by togetherness time in the fellowship hall?

Many fear so. United Methodist Women president Marjorie McFann says, "I've shed tears over this. We don't want to lose anyone, but we have to be careful we don't become two churches."

Amid all the planning for next year's 175th anniversary, the comfort of new classroom space and the challenge of overcrowded worship services, though, thrives a congregation reaching far and often beyond itself. That's one reason the United Methodist Rural Fellowship last year honored Midway Locust Grove UMC as "Church of the Year."

As one of the Missouri East Annual Conference's 5-star churches, it donates regularly to Prison Patch (prison parents and their children), a conference Advance special; Volunteers in Mission, a national Advance special; Chicuque Hospital in Mozambique, a world Advance special; Water for Tomorrow, a United Methodist Committee on Relief Advance project, and a missionary-support Advance special for Dr. Robert and Eva Wehrman in the Philippines.

Those are all planned and budgeted, along with at least four mission projects in Columbia.

Then there's the spontaneous outreach, like last year when Bishop W. T. Handy Jr. during annual conference sessions called for any church to volunteer $500 to help Chicuque Hospital buy an electric generator.

Midway Locust Grove lay delegate Don Sanders and Pastor Millspaugh conferred quickly, then volunteered. Offer accepted! All they had to do was go home and raise $500 in the midst of the $100,000 building campaign. No problem!

On a recent early-spring Sunday morning the venerable old sanctuary was around 85 percent "occupied."

One had to wonder how many other United Methodist services that day included a pastoral prayer calling on parishioners to "befriend the Kurdish refugees"; a junior-high boys' brass ensemble prelude; a sermon titled "Family Connections" based on the "vine and branches" text and supplemented by a children's sermon featuring small flowers suitable for planting at home; full-throated congregational singing and youth-group ushers.

Afterwards came the indispensable visiting time in the fellowship hall next door. No one seemed to stand unnoticed. Several walked up to the visiting reporter, welcomed him and described what this church means to them.

In a phrase: home and family.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN A. LOVELACE

MIDWAY, Mo.—Timmy, a foster child, plays happily during adult Sunday school at Midway Locust Grove United Methodist Church. The church financially supports Rainbow House, a temporary home for needy children in nearby Columbia, and children from there frequently visit the church.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN A. LOVELACE

MIDWAY, Mo.—The 1870 white clapboard sanctuary building and the adjoining church cemetery link past and present as the Rev. Carol Millspaugh and Joe Cunningham look at building plans which guided sub-contractors and church volunteers alike to erect the church's recently dedicated education wing.

Leaders give 'blueprint' for a building campaign

Reporter Staff Special

MIDWAY, Mo.—If a church is anticipating a building program, what should it do?

Here's what key lay people with a lot of experience say at Midway Locust Grove United Methodist Church:

1. Visit other churches that are building or have built recently. Borrow their best ideas.
2. Solicit major gifts to the building campaign early.
3. Call on your church's oldsters, even if you know that their gifts may be small.
4. Let people tell, preferably during Sunday worship services, why the church is important to them. Include youths, oldsters, and new members.
5. Demonstrate the need. Assess where the church is and analyze where the community is going.
6. Figure prices and estimates well in advance.
7. Acknowledge the fear factor, the concern of members that "this is too much for us to take on."
8. Use volunteer help in every way possible but sub-contract out as necessary. General contractor Joe Cunningham estimates that Midway Locust Grove Church received the equivalent of $30,000-$40,000 in volunteer labor on its latest education-wing project. His own time investment? About 800 hours.

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

Pastor 'enlivens' congregation

Reporter Staff Special

MIDWAY, Mo.—The Rev. Carol Millspaugh, the pastor with the radiant smile who gets much of her parishioners' credit for Midway Locust Grove UMC's growth, accepts such judgments modestly. But she readily identifies what she considers the basics of enlivening a congregation:

- Team-teaching in all classes, children through adults;
- Strong committee structure, including long-range planning;
- A structured visitor follow-up;
- Good quality, well-thought-out worship involving many people and a different lay worship leader each Sunday;
- Children's sermon every Sunday;
- Regular monthly newsletter;
- Strong music program.

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

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MORRISON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Central Florida, 2,000 members, community of 50,000, seeks Director of Youth Ministries. Full-time, year round basis working with junior and senior high students. Bachelor's degree required. Experience preferred. Job description available. Send resume: Search Committee, 1005 W. Main Street, Leesburg, FL 34748. (904) 787-3786.

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TRAVEL — 14-DAY HERITAGE TOUR of Britain, August 7-20, $1,595; and two 16-day tours (1) Panama Canal Cruise, Sept. 24-Oct. 9, $2,495; (2) Best of Australia/NZ, Oct. 29-Nov. 13, $3,150. Experienced UMC leadership. Dr. Cecil Pottieger, P.O. Box 3371, Frederick, MD 21701 (301) 696-8370).

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No. 31 is last issue for 'retired' lesson editor

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—The Rev. Horace R. Weaver says No. 31 is the last.

Though supposedly retired in 1982, Dr. Weaver has since continued to edit "The International Lesson Annual." His 31st and final effort, the 1991-92 edition, was released this month.

Horace Weaver

Author of "Getting Straight About the Bible," Dr. Weaver has written more than 800 articles and study units. He served 22 years as executive editor of United Methodist church school publications for adults before retiring.

The annual "consistently is The United Methodist Publishing House's best-seller every year, with annual sales of at least 30,000 copies," according to Ron Patterson, church resources senior editor in the publishing house's editorial division.

The 448-page resource, used by Sunday School teachers in several denominations, includes lesson analysis, Bible texts, explanations of Bible text, and suggestions by outstanding religious educators for every Sunday of the year, September-August.

Lesson analysis for the new edition was done by the man who will succeed Dr. Weaver as editor—the Rev. William H. Willimon, minister to the university and professor of the practice of Christian ministry at United Methodist-related Duke University in Durham, N.C.

United Methodist education resources are planned by the Curriculum Resources Committee, a 21-member panel of lay and clergy members.

The Church School Publications unit of the denomination's Board of Discipleship is responsible for writing and developing the materials, and the publishing house produces them under the direction of the Rev. Duane A. Ewers, editor of church school publications.

Advance names 68 world projects

United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—Sixty-eight projects around the world have been approved for the Advance for Christ and His Church—the United Methodist "second-mile giving program."

Total funding goal for the mission projects is $2.3 million.

Of the total, 27 projects were in Africa, 25 in the Pacific Islands, seven in Europe, two in the Middle East, four in Latin America and two connected with the United Methodist Committee on Relief, said the Rev. William T. Carter, staff executive of the Advance.

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Bishop blitzed for linking Israel, Nazis

By THOMAS MULLEN
Religious News Service

RICHMOND, Va.—Episcopal Bishop C. Charles Vache of Southern Virginia has drawn fire from Jewish leaders for comparing Israel's treatment of the Palestinians with early Nazi measures against the Jews.

Writing in his diocesan paper, "The Jamestown Cross," Bishop Vache said that Israel's behavior "approaches genocide of the type which the Jews experienced in the late '30s and early '40s in Germany. Many of the same tactics are now being used against the Palestinians."

The silence of Christian churches then was sinful, said the bishop, and caused millions to suffer. That silence must not be repeated in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he said.

Bishop Vache said that present Israeli measures—such as arrest and imprisonment without charges, confiscation or destruction of homes, random curfews and, especially, the bloody repression of the Intifada, the Palestinian uprising—"erode the moral fiber" of the Jewish state and its people.

U.S. support of Israel compromises our own "moral integrity," he wrote.

The Israeli-Nazi comparison is "ludicrous," charged Ira Gissen, the director of the regional office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, echoing the reaction of a number of area Jewish leaders.

"The churches were actively teaching contempt, which created the climate in which the Holocaust was possible," Mr. Gissen said. "Perhaps the bishop is trying to relieve his own profound sense of guilt." That is the only "reasonable explanation" for Bishop Vache's comments, he said.

The bishop acknowledged in a May 7 interview that his Nazi comparison would provoke strong criticism.

"Now, in no way do I intend to say that they (the Israeli government) have gas ovens," said Bishop Vache. "But for all intents and purposes, their goal is to remove from Israel those who are not of the Jewish faith.

"Palestinians are asking that we speak out," said Bishop Vache, who recently returned from his sixth trip to Israel. "I can't sit on it any longer.

"Who are the terrorists? Those who shoot bullets or those who throw stones?" he asked, referring to Israeli soldiers who have fired on rock-throwing Palestinian demonstrators.

Condemnation of Israeli responses to the Palestinian Intifada has come from many human rights groups and religious quarters, including the usual solidly supportive American Jewish community.

Few, however, have made the comparison between the Israeli and Nazi German governments.

Bishop Vache said he stands by his column, although he said it has been difficult for him to discuss the issue with leaders of Virginia's Jewish community.

Part of the reason, the Episcopal bishop said, is the attitude taken by some Jews that "if you criticize the Israeli government in any way, you're anti-Semitic."

Robert Zwang, assistant director of the Richmond Jewish Community Federation, said Bishop Vache is "ignorant" about Nazi-era Germany.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Moyers series discusses hate
Bill Moyers is hosting a three-part series on public broadcasting stations titled "Moyers/Beyond Hate." Featured guests include Jewish writer Elie Wiesel (left) and South African leader Nelson Mandela. Regarding the series theme, Mr. Moyers says, "Nothing about hate is simple. The closer you come to it, the more paradoxical it seems, presenting first one face, then another. But if we are ever to go beyond it, we must know it well."

Changes in war remembrance service allay concerns of critics

By AUSTIN CARLEY
Religious News Service

GLASGOW, Scotland—Changes in the texts of remarks prepared for a service of remembrance for the Persian Gulf war held recently in Glasgow helped allay fears of critics who asserted that the event as planned would have an unwarranted atmosphere of triumphalism.

The Rev. Philip Crowe, principal of Wells Theological College and a close friend of Anglican Archbishop George Carey of Canterbury, had even suggested that the service might be blasphemous.

He said that "if the thanksgiving had been unqualified and what we were saying to God was 'We believe that you have been with us and have blessed us in everything we have done,' that would have been a very serious act of blasphemy, in the true sense of that word. I mean by that a profane speaking about God."

Anglican Archbishop John Habgood of York said the organizers of the interfaith service "were on this difficult balance of saying here was something that was well done which needed to be done and yet what a terrible world it is in which such things have got to be done."

Roman Catholic Archbishop Tom Winning of Glasgow changed the wording of his prayer, which was written by the Rev. Bill Morris, minister of St. Mungo's Cathedral where the service was held.

Mr. Winning said afterward that the words prepared for him implied that Iraqis should convert to Christianity.

"To ask God to turn the hearts of those who had been our enemies to the truth of Jesus Christ might have been given an unfortunate interpretation," the archbishop said.

The Roman Catholic leader said he was pleased that the revised service mentioned "remembrance, thanksgiving, repentance, capacity for doing wrong, the horrors of war, peace, justice."

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Cholera epidemic draws church response
IQUITOS, Peru—Church groups are rushing aid to cholera victims in Peru, Colombia and Brazil as the tragedy grows. The epidemic is spreading in areas like this where Peruvian children are playing. Their hometown of Iquitos is considered a gateway to spread the epidemic throughout the Amazon region.

Movie star buffalo helps rescue nuns

By WILLMAR THORKELSON
Religious News Service

Cody is an angel with horns who rose to stardom in the Academy Award-winning movie, "Dances with Wolves."

Though he may not be aware, he is being heralded for rescuing a cloistered order of Roman Catholic nuns by attracting enough people to a bar and grill to raise nearly $1,800 for Mount Carmel Hermitage near Houston, Minn.

Cody is a 1,600-pound tame buffalo owned by neighbors of the hermitage, Mike and Robin Fogel.

The idea that an order of nuns, founded during the Crusades, would be helped by a buffalo at a function in an area bar and grill seems a bit incongruous, Mike Fogel admitted.

But it worked. Cody's fame attracted people as nothing else would, he told the Rochester "Post-Bulletin."

The nuns prayed for help because they moved to the area a few years ago and had to spend money on a new building. They had left their hermitage in Wisconsin because a nearby road was widened and they lost their solitude.

The nuns spend their time in quiet prayer and work, surviving on donations and on what they grow in gardens.

But they also help area people as spiritual advisers or friends during hard times. They pray for the world and "in a world of chaos, there needs to be that aspect of prayer," said Elizabeth Holdenhauer, a neighbor.

Mike Fogel said the nuns helped him through personal hardships, so he felt he should repay them.

Review

Hope found in choices, challenges in TV series

Religious News Service

"God made man because he loves stories," Elie Wiesel wrote in "The Gates of the Forest."

If so, the story-loving God must be enjoying the new half-hour television series, "My Life and Times," which airs Wednesday nights on the ABC network.

This is rare television fare—sensitive, touching, revealing, healing.

"My Life and Times" (9:30 ET) premiered April 24 for a limited run of seven episodes. If it gains the audience and the ratings it deserves, it should return in the fall as a weekly series.

Ron Koslow, who created and produced TV's "Beauty and the Beast," is the executive producer and creator of the new show.

Looking back from A.D. 2035

Tom Irwin stars as Ben Miller, an 85-year-old man living in a retirement community in the year 2035.

Each episode revolves around a story from his past.

With time on his hands and someone always around to talk to, Ben remembers his life—the marker events, the turning points, the peak experiences, the people and places which shaped him.

Ben's times turn out to be our times as he looks back to the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and into our future.

Usually his story is in response to a need expressed by one of his visitors. Ben has learned from his life, and he passes on his wisdom to others.

As he notes in the introduction to each episode, "The one thing I know is life is an adventure; you've got to hold on and let it carry you away."

On the first program, Ben explained to his grandson how things do not always turn out the way we expect. His plans to be with his wife, Rebecca (Helen Hunt), during the birth of their child were dashed when he was trapped in his car during the 1989 California earthquake.

A close encounter with death and some advice from his advertising agency boss set Ben on a different career path.

Other episodes revolve around the start of a new century, an encounter with evil in the form of a serial killer, the money fever of the 1980s and the depression of the late 1990s.

Some call it life review

In these short but moving episodes, Ben is actually engaged in a process that some call life review.

Some of the best contemporary spiritual authors have stressed the importance of this kind of review and of intentionally recalling and telling the story of one's life to others. Telling that story, they say, is a way to lay claim to our lives and to understand our spiritual journeys.

Most people have conducted such a life review, perhaps while paging through a photo album or watching home movies.

Now Ron Koslow's "My Life and Times" provides opportunities to expand that activity.

As you watch these sensitively written half-hour snapshots of Ben's life, you will find yourself recalling similar moments in your own experience.

Most likely, you will want to share them, as Ben does, with your family and friends. In this way, "My Life and Times" emerges as truly involving television.

At the end of a wedding episode, one young woman listening to Ben remarks, "It was just so romantic." Ben shakes his head and responds, "There's hope yet."

We agree. There's hope yet that a television series can make the most of the medium by hallowing the intimate moments of people's lives and helping us to learn from them.

Dear Deborah

Why do church children say cruel things?

Dear Deborah:

My son has been hurt by ugly and cruel things said to him by other children at church. He refused to go for a long time, then Easter Sunday he went again.

I was so pleased. But when we got home, he said he would never go again. He will not say what was said to him.

The parents of these children are some of the kindest people I have ever met. The Sunday school teachers were made aware of this, but I guess it isn't important to them that the lessons they are teaching are not sinking in but just roll off.

Is there an answer to this problem?

A loving Mom

Dear Loving Mom:

Please do not write off the church and Sunday school teachers by assuming it is not important to them. There could be many other reasons why nothing changes.

I have known many teachers who really despair over situations they are helpless to change. Can you talk with them again?

Also, can you talk with the pastor? Sometimes the pastor can talk with the parents easier than teachers can.

In the meantime, give your son all your support and love. Help him learn forgiveness so he does not become an angry, bitter adult. Pray for all involved.

If necessary, seek a different church, but first try prayer and talking to the pastor. I will pray for you, too.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

'Wesley Graces' build from Jesus' examples

Be present at our table, Lord;
Be here and everywhere adored;
Thy creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in paradise with thee.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

When he fed the multitude and again when he fed the disciples at the Last Supper, Jesus Christ followed the old Jewish custom of giving thanks and saying a blessing at the meal (see Matt. 14:19, Mark 6:41, Matt. 26:26-27, and Mark 14:22-24).

In writing about the Lord's Supper to the church at Corinth, Paul speaks of this practice (I Cor. 11:24). The writings of early church fathers indicate that the practice was continued.

Robert McCutchan points out that prose expressions were generally used for the blessings until about the mid-16th century. But in Henry VIII's "Primer" of 1545, metrical versions were given, and such forms have appeared in every English "Primer" since then.

Two graces, commonly known throughout the English-speaking world, were written by John Cennick, one of the first lay preachers of the Wesleys.

In 1841 Cennick published a small collection of hymns in which these two graces appeared.

"Be present at our table, Lord" was headed "Before Meat," and "We bless thee, Lord, for this our food" was headed "After Meat."

The first of these has remained unchanged, but the second has been considerably altered and improved.

Because John and Charles Wesley used these graces, they are commonly called "The Wesley Graces."

One treasured item at the Wesley Chapel on City Road, London, today is the teapot used by John Wesley, upon which he had engraved both the "Grace before Meat" and the "Grace after Meat." Replicas of the Wesley teapot with these engravings have been much sought after.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Spirit of the Living God"

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

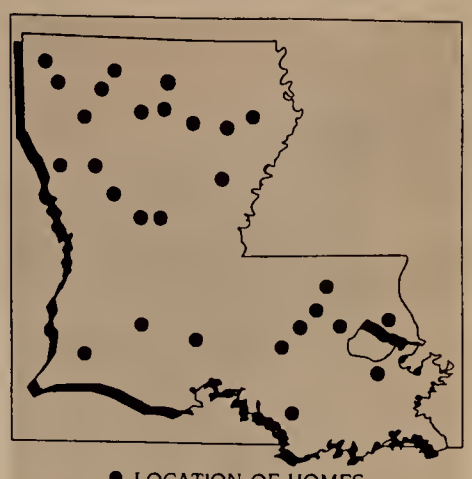
Bible schools just ahead
Crayons and coloring books will be tools along with Bibles and other study materials when Vacation Bible Schools begin in churches across the country within a few weeks.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
RMHB
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

HOUSING LOUISIANA RETIRED MINISTERS

SUPPORT OUR RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES

RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES
United Methodist Church
Louisiana Conference



• LOCATION OF HOMES

FINANCIAL WOES???

Not really, but there are two concerns we would like to share with you.

(1) 1990 was a good year. A home in Downsville was occupied for the first time by a retired minister and wife, a home in Ruston was enlarged and remodeled, and a new residence was constructed in Ruston with the Board and retired minister sharing in the cost. The latter projects caused a drain on the Reserve for Building Homes, since expenditures amounted to approximately what would ordinarily be spent in a four year period for this purpose. There is a need for generous gifts to help replenish this fund.

(2) The insurance and maintenance costs continue to escalate. Each resident pays a maintenance fee of 6¢ a square foot of living area per month. On the standard 2 bedroom 1½ bath house with a living area of 1250 sq. ft. the monthly fee would be $75.00. This rate has been in effect for over five years. These fees are used for insurance coverage and for maintenance.

This fund has operated at a deficit for the past four years, largely because the aging of the houses required more repairs and upkeep. Also the annual insurance cost of approximately $20,000 continues to increase. The Methodist Foundation of Louisiana has approved a grant of $2,200 to the Board in 1991 to help offset some of the deficit. However, meeting these costs will continue to be a concern for the Board and could be minimized by contributions from churches and individuals.

I am enclosing a contribution of $_____ for: (check one)

____ Extended Ministries and Administration

____ Reserve for Building Homes

____ Undesignated

As a memorial to _____

In honor of _____

Send acknowledgment to _____

Address _____

_____

My name and address is _____

_____

My church is _____

District _____ Date _____

____ I would be interested in donating my home or other property

Mail checks to:
Retired Ministers Homes Board, Inc.
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720

HOME AVAILABLE IN AMITE

The home in Amite, Louisiana (pictured below) is now available for occupancy. The brick veneer residence is located in a nice section of this parish seat town. It is situated on a lovely lot not far from the First United Methodist Church.

Rev. and Mrs. William M. Finnin, Sr. have been the only occupants of this home. Since they are now deceased, the home has become available. Eligible persons who desire more information about this house are invited to contact the Director.

Home located in Amite

RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES SUNDAY

September 15 has been designated as Retired Ministers Homes Sunday. Churches throughout the Conference are encouraged to consider this ministry and support it through a special offering. Envelopes will be provided each church for use in contributing to this Conference Advance Missionary Special.

DR. & MRS. DONALD J. HALL TO OCCUPY HOME IN LAFAYETTE

Don Hall, who plans to retire at this session of the Annual Conference, and his wife Evelyn plan to move into the Retired Ministers Home at 115 S. Acadian, Lafayette in June. This residence is located in a desirable and convenient area of the city. It was previously occupied by Rev. and Mrs. Mack Bentley followed by Mr. Donn McClelland, a teacher, who resided there during the interim.

The Board is pleased that this home could be made available to the Halls and trust that their stay will be most satisfactory and enjoyable.

Dr. and Mrs. Don Hall

Home located in Lafayette

SLIDELL HOME DEDICATED

The Retired Ministers Home in Slidell, 1558 Wildwood Lane, was formally dedicated Saturday, May 18. Dr. H. Warren Blakeman, Superintendent of the Northshore District, led this special worship service. Also participating were Dr. Dewitt M. Ginn, Rev. Gary Don Willis, Dr. J. Philip Woodland, Rev. James W. Ailor, Mr. W. A. (Buster) Baker and Mr. Mat Kawasaki.

This house was purchased jointly by the First United Methodist Church of Slidell and the Retired Ministers Homes Board May 14, 1976. The church provided furnishings for the home. Jim and Hazel Lea Ailor have been the only ministerial family to occupy this residence. Securing this home in Slidell was especially significant in that the Board for the first time had property in all districts of the Conference.

Other churches are invited to do as First Church Slidell has done. This adds to the effectiveness of the Retired Ministers Homes program in providing an additional home. Also, it is beneficial to the local church and community to have a retired minister living in the area.

Home located in Slidell

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Board of Directors will meet in Baton Rouge at the Methodist Building, 527 North Boulevard, Friday, June 14, 1991. The meeting will be held in the Conference Room on the third floor beginning at 11:00 a.m.

HONORARIUMS AND MEMORIALS

IN HONOR OF:	FROM:
Rev. Bryant Gore	Anonymous
Reverend Raymond Crofoot	Choudrant United Methodist Church
Rev. Nathan Avant	Mr. & Mrs. R. M. Rosfeld
Rev. & Mrs. J. W. Ailor	Dr. & Mrs. Tom C. Arceneaux
Ruth M. Ballard	Barbara Ballard

IN MEMORY OF:	FROM:
Reverend Paul Durbin	Mrs. Annie S. Durbin
Mr. Leroy Barbier	Mrs. Clara L. Barbier
Reverend Glendon R. Messer	Reverend & Mrs. Bryant Gore
Beulah Matherne	Tessa Brownlee
Reverend S. Percy Emanuel	Reverend Robert L. Peyton
Mr. Robert E. Rayburn	Rebecca R. Drost
Reverend E. L. Tobie	Jane T. Bennett
Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Davis	Mr. Greg Henry
O. R. & Mattie Woods	Thomas G. Woods
Mr. Norman Gallaspy	Mr. John Gallaspy
Mr. Tom Shepherd	Shreveport District Parsonettes
Gladys Laird	Don't Mention Age Group, Ingleside UMC
Louise McBride	Don't Mention Age Group, Ingleside UMC
Rev. Fred Flurry	Don't Mention Age Group, Ingleside UMC
Mrs. Dorothy Lankford	Dr. & Mrs. J. L. Smith
Her Mother, Father, Sister and Brother	Ernestine Rosenbohm
Mrs. Dorothy Lankford	Ruston District Parsonettes

The Retired Ministers Homes Board has received a check for $1,425.40 from the General Board of Pensions. This represents one-half of the insurance paid upon the death of Mrs. Dorothy J. Lankford which she had requested be directed to the Board.

Rev. and Mrs. Lankford lived in Ruston in one of the residences there. After her husband's death Dorothy continued to reside there until her recent death. Her thoughtfulness is much appreciated by members of the Board.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Loolsiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

138 NUMBER 1 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 MAY 31, 1991

Reflections on Annual Conference

Annual Conference always gets my creative juices flowing.

It is a time of greeting old friends and making new ones, a time of reflecting on the past and planning for the future, a time of debate and decision making.

But most of all, Annual Conference is a time of renewal of faith and recommitment to the mission of Christ and the Cburch.

A corporate executive, who was a delegate for the first time, sat through Annual Conference in another state. After adjournment, he went up to the bishop (who was a friend) and asked if he wanted a rookie delegate's opinion of the last four days. The bishop nodded yes.

"Well, my friend, we have sat here listening to speakers, reports, resolutions and motions. You have brought together leadership of our local churches — pastors and laity. But little was really done that will make a difference in our churches or our world. We are going home tired, bored and a bit misused. Your have blown a great opportunity!"

I pray that the delegates to the 1991 Louisiana Annual Conference will not have the same response.

Let our reports, worship, discussion and actions be channels for God's Holy Spirit!

William B. Oden

Dr. Fred B. Craddock to Speak at Annual Conference

Dr. Fred B. Craddock

The Reverend Dr. Fred B. Craddock, internationally known speaker and author, will be the guest preacher at the 1991 Louisiana Annual Conference. Dr. Craddock, holder of the Bandy Distinguished Chair in Preaching and New Testament in the Candler School of Theology, Emory University, will speak at the Memorial/Communion Service at Centenary's Gold Dome on Monday, June 3 at 1:30 p.m. He will also preach at the evening Services of Worship, First United Methodist Church, June 3, 4, and 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Craddock received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Johnson Bible College, Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1950, his Bachelor of Divinity from Phillips in 1953, and his Ph.D. in New Testament from Vanderbilt in 1964. He has done postdoctoral study at Tubingen, Germany, and at Yale.

An ordained minister of the Disciples of Christ Church, Dr. Craddock has served pastorates in Tennessee and Oklahoma. In addition, he has served on a number of national and state committees and boards within his denomination. Dr. Craddock is a member of the Association of Disciples of Theological Discussion, the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Biblical Literature, and the Society for New Testament Studies. He is on the Editorial Board of **Quarterly Review** and has served on the Advisory Board of **Interpretation.**

Dr. Craddock has written eight books: **The Pre-Existence of Christ in the New Testament** (1968), **As One Without Authority** (1971, rev. 1974 and 1979), **Overhearing the Gospel** (1978), **The Gospels** (1981), commentaries on **John** (1982) and **Philippians** (1984), **Preaching** (1985), and a commentary on **Luke** (1990). In addition, he has prepared with Lee Keck the **Pentecost 3, Series B** volume of the **Proclamation** series; with Ernest Saunders the Epiphany volume; with Carl Holladay, John Hayes, and Gene Tucker he has published a nine-volume series, **Preaching the New Common Lectionary** (1984); and he has provided the "Commentary on the Gospel of Luke" in **Harper's One-Volume Commentary** (1988). Dr. Craddock has also contributed a number of articles to various journals.

Although he preaches widely at church assemblies and ministers' conferences, Dr. Craddock is especially looking forward to returning to our state. "I always enjoy Louisiana — especially the food," he says, "and I also enjoy meeting informally with former students for a bit of 'lying and scratching' about old times."

Cynthia Wilson-Felder is Annual Conference Devotional Leader

The Devotional Leader for the 1991 Louisiana Annual Conference is Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder, a Diaconal Minister of Music at Hamilton Park United Methodist in Dallas, Texas. Mrs. Wilson-Felder will begin each day's session with a devotion in song.

Mrs. Wilson-Felder says that she is "thrilled to be returning to Louisiana," her home state. She grew up in New Orleans in a musical family and began her singing career in the Baptist Church her father pastored. She continued her musical training at Dillard University and Perkins School of Theology.

Mrs. Wilson-Felder is a renown concert artist and clinician in several countries. She coordinated and directed the 1986 United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, California; was a featured soloist at The 1991 Gathering in Fort Worth, Texas; was song leader at the 1990 United Methodist Conference on Ministry for Youth and Young Adults in St. Louis, Missouri; and was the song leader at the 1990 Interdenominational Conference on Campus Ministry in Louisville, Kentucky.

Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder

In addition, Mrs. Wilson-Felder has contributed to United Methodist Song Books and was a consultant to the Book of Worship revision committee. That assignment left her "anxious to share the new hymnal experience, especially the diversity of cultures it represents."

She shares her gifts, as well, in her solo album, "There's Another Witness," available on cassette and LP recordings.

Dr. Jim Holsinger Will Address Conference Laity

Lay delegates to the Louisiana Annual Conference are extremely fortunate this year to have Dr. Holsinger as our keynote speaker opening the lay events with an address Monday afternoon June 3 in the Gold Dome.

Awaken the Giant, a book Jim Holsinger co-authored with Evelyn Laycock, is just one of the contributions Dr. Holsinger has made to The United Methodist Church. As the Conference Lay Leader of the Virginia Conference, President of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, member of the general Council on Ministries, as well as a lifetime dedicated local and district lay leader and leader in education, evangelism and stewardship, Dr. Holsinger typifies committed lay leadership at the best. He is considered one of the most outstanding lay members of our church nationwide.

Professionally Dr. Holsinger is the first presidentially-appointed chief medical director in the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). He holds medical degrees from Duke and the University of Florida as well as a Ph.D. in anatomy and physiology from Duke and a Master's in hospital administration from the University of South Carolina. He is a major general in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Dr. Jim Holsinger

June Conference Calendar

2 Cabinet Meeting, Shreveport
3-6 Annual Conference, Centenary College, Shreveport
5 2nd Annual United Methodist Men Luncheon, Centenary College
6-8 DCYM Training, Centenary College, Shreveport
12 South Central Jurisdiction United Methodist Men's Congress for Men, Centenary College
12-16 United Methodist Women West Gulf Regional School of Christian Mission, Centenary College
14 Retired Ministers Homes Board Meeting, Headquarters Building, 11:00 a.m.
17-20 Bishops' Week, Mt. Sequoyah
28-30 Jurisdictional United Methodist Men's Conference, Gold Dome, Centenary College

United Methodist Men Prayer Line

Louisiana United Methodist Men will man a national UM Prayer Line Tuesday and Wednesday, June 4 and 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. during Annual Conference.

The Prayer Line number is 800-251-2468. UMM members Charles Dick, Ofney Ellis and Ronald Sarver are coordinating the project.

Conference Center Plans Moving Forward

The Reverend Dr. Harvey G. Williamson, Louisiana Conference Center Project Coordinator, announced that on Friday, May 10, at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria, the papers were signed for the purchase of the property for the new Conference Center. Following the signing, the Board authorized the architect, Thio Steinschulte, to begin working on a master plan for the project. "Now that we own the property," says Dr. Williamson, "we can begin pulling together our thoughts, plans and dreams for the Conference Center.

Dr. Tom Matheny, Chairperson of the Conference Center Board of Trustees looks over the contracts for the purchase of the property for the Conference Center with Mr. Zack Woodard and Mr. Charles Weems, representatives of Royal Martin Lumber Company, previous owners of the property.

Eleven Ministers Retire This Annual Conference

Eleven ministers will retire at the 1991 session of the Louisiana Annual Conference. A Service of Retirement honoring these pastors will be held on Tuesday, June 4 at 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church.

The next day, each retiree will address the Conference starting at 10:55 a.m. in Centenary's Gold Dome in what is always a high point in Conference activities. "Well done, thou good and faithful servants . . ."

Louis Augustine, Jr.

Fay Barr-Hartung

James Caraway

Tom Crosby

Roland Friedrich

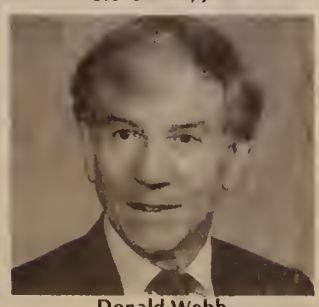
Donald Hall

Cleve Herr, Jr.

Edwin House

Wesley Lynch, Jr.

Benjamin Petty



Donald Webb

Editorial

A reminder about the spiritual insights of children

Big blessings sometimes come in small packages.

Example, a recently published book, "Children's Letters to God: The New Collection" (New York: Workman Publishing).

As books go, it's a small package: a mere 88 vest-pocket-sized pages. As its title suggests, and like its two predecessor volumes published in 1966 and 1967, it features letters to God—short ones, of course—written by little people.

The topics they address, however, are anything but small. They deal with huge theological matters through the uncomplicated eyes of children.

On death:

"Dear God, Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones why don't you just keep the ones you got now? —Nancy"

On sin:

"Dear God, Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother. —Larry"

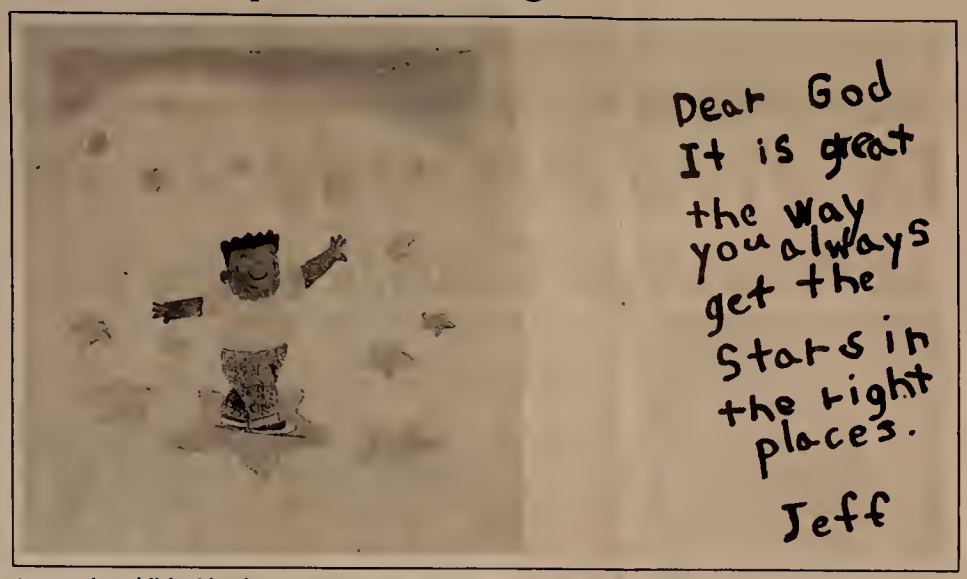
On ordination:

"Dear God, Is Reverend Coe a friend of yours, or do you just know him through business? —Donny"

The appearance of this latest collection of "Children's Letters to God" offers a creative reminder of a vital truth: Children often have rich spiritual insights.

Sadly, adult minds and hearts often are not inclined to look upon the reality of God or the goodness of creation with a child's eyes of wonder and appreciation.

By the time many of us "grow up," we've not only put behind childish, immature things, but also have lost the positive quality of "child-likeness" that Jesus commended (Matthew 18:3).



A recently published book, "Children's Letters to God: The New Collection," deals with huge theological matters through the uncomplicated eyes of children. Among other things, the book is a creative reminder of a vital but oft-forgotten truth: Children tend to have rich spiritual lives and insights.

Child-likeness involves staying open to life's spiritual dimension, which adults tend to forget in their preoccupation with "the real world." In our secular society, that too often means a world without knowledge or thought of God.

Perhaps recognizing that an abundant life embraces far more than the "real world," Jesus calls us to welcome children into our midst (Mark 10:14).

Our reason for doing so shouldn't be solely or even primarily to teach them about God, but to hear and respond to our children's own experience of divine reality.

Indeed, experience shows that congregations which genuinely welcome and celebrate the gifts of their children are richly blessed numerically and, more importantly, spiritually.

Summer is an opportune time for congregations to look for new or additional ways to open their arms to children and make them welcome.

A "Vacation Bible School," particularly one that is open to the community, is a proven effective way to do so.

Congregations also should build on another proven idea: Invite children to write letters to God. Use the results as a starting point for adults and children to witness together to God's loving presence in our lives.

My Witness

Picking disciples, delegates calls for an act of faith

By TOM SLACK

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Tom Slack is a ministerial member of the West Ohio conference. Mr. Slack is editor of the West Ohio conference edition of The United Methodist Review in which this column originally appeared. It is reprinted with his permission.

It made iront page news in Columbus; the election board opened the polls and nobody came.

Well, almost nobody. The precinct is in the neighborhood of The Ohio State University. Most of the residents are students, who rent apartments during the academic year.

One voter showed up. She makes a point of voting, she said, and has not missed an election in her four years of undergraduate education. She's graduating this year. Who will vote then?

Something is odd here. Among the flag-waving crowds, beneath the yellow-ribboned lamp posts, the self-congratulatory politicians and smug citizens thump each other on the back for their victorious defense of democracy and freedom — and the polls open, and close, and one out of the 800 eligible voters casts a ballot.

It won't be that way at our Lakeside meeting site. Thirty coveted seats await the favored from West Ohio Conference when The United Methodist Church reinvents itself in Louisville next May, and 38 more can go to Adrian College when the North Central Jurisdiction chooses its bishops.

This is the time of year when many writers in conference newspapers take on the tone of my fifth-grade teacher: "Now, class, put your heads on your desks. We're going to vote for hall monitor. No peeking, now. Don't vote just for your friends. We want the best hall monitors we can get."

I never got elected, but discovered that my vote was often worth a couple of Twinkies out of somebody's lunch. I didn't vote just for my friends. I voted for my benefactors.

We'll elect the same kind of delegation every other conference will elect. Some of our delegates will be liberals, and some will be conservatives. Some will be urban, and some will be rural. Some will be political operators, some will be politically naive. Some will be first-timers, some will be "old hands."

Into their hands and deliberations we will put the denomination, temporarily, and somehow God will make those 1,000 liberal/conservative, urban/rural, parochial/international, seasoned/green delegates into a community of faith. And then they'll give us our denomination back, with its processes refined, and its rules renewed, and its tradition reinterpreted, and for four more years we'll travel on together.

One lectionary text a few weeks ago came from Acts. It told the story of choosing an apostle to replace Judas. I had always thought the "casting of lots" was something like rolling dice — but one interpreter suggested it resembled voting more than a game of chance.

To be eligible, the candidates had to be witnesses to the Resurrection and known disciples of Jesus throughout his ministry.

I guess as long as we vote for folks like that, The United Methodist Church will be all right.

Letters to the Editor

How about knighthood for healers of war?

Since knighthood has been bestowed upon General Norman Schwarzkopf for his direction of "Desert Storm" and its "quick end," it seems in order to honor those who continuously and without much publicity, go about mending the destruction of the wars with "quick endings."

How about "knighthood" or "ladyship" for persons such as Norma Kehrberg, recent head of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, or Bruce Weaver, present interim director of UMCOR? How about recognition for Church World Service's Lani Havens and her many staff members and volunteers?

There are countless saints who care for the long-term wounds, both physical and psychological, after politically-caused disasters. There's not a lot of "glory" spread around for those doing the difficult mending of human-caused disasters. And surely there's cooperation with Catholic Relief, United Jewish Appeal and Red Cross. Here's to knighthood for them too.

Perhaps on her next visit, Queen Elizabeth might be persuaded to bestow recognition on those who go about picking up the pieces of conflict, disaster of war, and of course the heroic efforts devoted after natural disasters.

No, United Methodists aren't in it for glory or reward. The vast public display of recognition and honor for someone who "successfully" directed untold destruction and wounding of hundreds of thousands of lives seems in stark contrast with the systematic relief efforts that attempt to address the hurts and havoc of a war initiated largely by the United States.

June E. Rothe-Barneson
Chico, California

Psalter defended

A letter in the May 17 issue criticized the singing of psalter responses. One comment made concerned the "throw-back to the Anglican Church."

The practice of singing Psalms was in place long before there was ever the Anglican Church. Looking at the book of Psalms, we can clearly see the book is a collection of poems, prayers, and songs written by people for use in public worship services.

The ancient Israelites, like contemporary Christians, frequently praised God through songs. Exodus 15 and Judges 5 provide us with other examples of singing praises. The Psalms were written to provide common people with ways to sing their praises to God.

The Wesleys wrote many beautiful songs for the common people to sing during worship services. But, they also encouraged congregations to sing the Psalms because, as ministers of the Word, they knew the Psalms were sung to glorify God.

Personally, I find the psalter to be more singable than many of the newer, culturally-diverse hymns. But, that doesn't stop me from singing the newer songs.

It just means that I might need to open my mind (and mouth) to offering God's praise through a variety of hymns and songs.

David Bigley
Pleasant Plains, Illinois

Stop Israel tours? No

I take exception to the position stated in the April 26 "Here I Stand" headlined, "Back Palestinians, no tours to Israel."

The writer suggested that we should "discontinue sponsoring and leading group travel to Israel until occupied territories are given back to the Palestinians."

It seems just as consistent to me to suggest that the United Nations call for us to "discontinue sponsoring and leading group travel" to Oklahoma until the U.S. returns the territories to the Native Americans.

C. Nicky Blackford
Midwest City, Oklahoma

Editorial was interesting

I was interested in your editorial, "Telling the truth about lying" which appeared in the May 10 issue.

The results of the poll were not particularly surprising to me, other than I would have expected the percentages to be closer to 100 percent. But then, some of the respondents may have been lying.

I think a more interesting question that could have been asked would be "Do you believe that lying is morally wrong, i.e. sinful?"

The problem the church faces is different if it simply has to get the people of God to quit doing some act that even they acknowledge as sinful—as opposed to trying to minister to those who routinely sin in some way and refuse to accept their acts as wrong (sinful).

In either event, however, you are correct that the church's teaching on the matter should be clear and consistent: "disregard for the Holy Scriptures shreds the ties of trust that bind us to God and neighbor."

It occurred to me as I read your editorial, that the principles of truth embraced therein (except for the survey statistics) would be equally applicable if the subject had been homosexuality.

For example, your paragraph which reads "For Christians, however, the human bent to falsehood as a fact of life does not excuse it" could have, with equal validity read, "For Christians, however, the human bent to homosexuality as a fact of life does not excuse it."

Robert Grandy
Westford, Massachusetts

I was crushed

I was crushed by a statement in the May 10 article headlined, "Bishops' mosaic looks to 21st century."

The statement, concerning possible changes in the ordained ministry said, "Apparently as a result of the five bishops' endorsement, the full council debated primarily how to make the proposal work rather than whether it is an appropriate model for the United Methodist ministry."

To me, the major item in this proposal is that only elders serve communion. This would be a totally unacceptable for me and I assume many grass-root United Methodists.

Any thinking person is aware that the elders serve in the big churches where the biggest bucks are to be made. No one will deny they have earned the extra income by reason of more education, if this is the criteria by which they are to be evaluated.

This leaves the small church in the hands of the deacons and local pastors who under this new proposal would be denied the right to serve communion.

Communion is a vital part of the nurturing of United Methodists and should not be denied anyone because they lack the financial power to hire an elder as their pastor.

Changes continue to kill off our small churches. We have no power or control over some changes, but this we do have the power to stop. This proposal, if passed would act as a bulldozer to bury the United Methodist church in small towns and rural areas.

Ruth M. Stumbaugh
Mountain View, Missouri

Faithfully yours

God and 'the little engine'

As I huffed and puffed and hauled my grandmotherly form around the jogging track some months ago, I thought of my own grandmother who, so many years ago, introduced me to a very important book.

Diane Balay

That book is "The Little Engine That Could" by Watty Piper.

You remember the story. The little steam engine had to pull a long string of railroad cars up an enormous hill.

It was a great struggle for the little engine. So turning her wheels to the rhythm of her words, and gathering speed as she went, she said, "I think I can. I think I can. I think I can."

Finally, on the verge of exhaustion, she reached the top. But as she clicked easily down the other side, she could say merrily, "I thought I could. I thought I could. I thought I could."

So I struggled toward my three mile goal on the track, thinking about the little engine that could.

That story says a lot to me about life as a child of God. God sometimes asks some very scary, very challenging things of us. Sometimes our hills seem too tough to climb, our River Jabboks too swift to cross.

Those are the times when we wrestle with angels . . . and demons . . . and with ourselves.

But if we believe, as I do, that God would not ask us to do something that we cannot do, we put one foot forward and then the other and say to ourselves, "I think I can. I think I can."

My three-mile goal was met months ago. My body is a little less grandmotherly.

Now I can sprint into the last turn for the finish line and say, "I thought I could. I thought I could."

So it can be with whatever God calls us to do. And maybe, just maybe, as we make the final turn, we will hear deep in our hearts, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

Ms. Balay is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"As it is written, 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him'—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit" (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Acts 10:34-35)

Readings for week of June 3

Monday: Psalms 20
Tuesday: Psalms 21
Wednesday: 1 Samuel 16:1-13
Thursday: Mark 2:23-28
Friday: Mark 3:1-6
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 4:1-4
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 4:5-12

Clarification

The May 17 "My Witness" headlined, "How excellent is thy name," by Bishop Dan E. Solomon was printed at the request of the Reporter editorial staff with Bishop Solomon's permission. Bishop Solomon did not submit his prayer for publication.

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

AFRICA U. MONEY: Up to $800,000 designated toward a $20 million total goal but delayed pending new information has been released for United Methodist-related Africa University. Directors of the church's General Council on Finance and Administration recently released the funds for completion of architectural drawings and employment of a dean of the College of Agriculture, a registrar, a librarian and a plant director. Release of the money was approved with the understanding that employment contracts contain provisions for termination if "unexpected events or conditions force the cancellation or lengthy postponement of plans to open the university" in Zimbabwe. Classes at the new university are scheduled to begin March 23, 1992.

'TIME' MAGAZINE BLISTERED: A specialist in civil and religious liberties and a prominent Holocaust scholar, both United Methodist ministers, have blasted "Time" magazine for its May 6 cover story that denounced the Church of Scientology as a "cult of greed." The Rev. Dean M. Kelley, counselor on religious liberty for the National Council of Churches, and the Rev. Franklin H. Littell, a founder of the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, wrote to the newsmagazine to protest the article. The church has also issued an 80-page defense, consisting largely of documents, titled "Fact vs. Fiction."

PRESIDENT TO SPEAK: President George Bush has accepted an invitation to address the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta and to meet with about 30 "key Southern Baptist" leaders before his address. The president will speak for 15 minutes during the closing session of the three-day meeting June 6 and will meet for about 20 minutes prior to that with Southern Baptist leaders selected by the Rev. Morris Chapman, president of the 15-million-member denomination.

STAFF POSITIONS CUT: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has terminated 16 staff positions and is eliminating nine others through attrition as part of a series of cutbacks designed to reduce its 1991 spending by $5.2 million. Five in the Office of the Secretary, involving Information Management Services staff, generated protests because security personnel were called to escort the people from the denomination's headquarters building in Chicago.

TOOLS WON'T WORK: Preaching and hymn-singing are often used as evangelistic tools, but they won't be very successful with Muslims, an interfaith specialist at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board told the recent annual meeting of the North American Baptist Fellowship. Muslim growth is a major obstacle to the aim of various Baptist groups to evangelize the world for Christ. For this reason, outreach to Muslims and members of various ethnic groups was a major emphasis at the annual meeting of the fellowship made up of 12 autonomous Baptist conventions or federations with 133,700 churches and 29.5 million members in North America.The Rev. Maurice Smith of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board told the 60 Baptist leaders that Muslims "distrust preaching and missionaries. They don't propagate their faith through preachers. They often dislike hymn-singing and have no parallel for it in their own worship tradition."

Compiled from news and staff reports

Spiritual guidance tradition making comeback

Class leaders will help church members with 'practical advice on how to be a Christian'

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—"Who can give us down-to-earth practical advice on how to be a Christian in a world that doesn't make it easy to be a Christian?"

The man behind the question was the Rev. David Lowes Watson, head of the United Methodist Discipleship board's Covenant Discipleship and Christian Formation division.

His audience: Some 40 United Methodist leaders from across the nation.

The answer, Dr. Watson made clear, is the class leader—a layperson selected specifically to help the pastor.

Class leaders—not to be confused with Sunday school class teachers—are not new to Methodism. Rather, they go back to the earliest class meetings organized by John Wesley, Methodism's founder.

On the American frontier, class leaders were especially important in the rapid spread of Methodism, said Dr. Douglas Strong, professor at United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington.

Within 26 years of the denomination's first church in this country in 1784, 14,000 class meetings were operating in the United States, he said.

"While the circuit rider was out evangelizing, the class leader provided the nurturing and the pastoring," he explained.

"They were a friend and parent to class members," he added.

Over the years, the office of class leader disappeared *de facto* except in the black tradition and in some Methodist mission churches, Dr. Strong continued. Eventually it disappeared from the church's Book of Discipline.

In 1988, the office of class leader reappeared in the Discipline after an absence of 50 years.

The 40 participants at the Nashville meeting on class leaders were invited there to help take the next step in bringing class leaders to local churches.

Class leaders, Dr. Watson said, will help small groups of church members learn to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ through "acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Class leaders in those churches which choose to designate them will be:

- Selected by and under direct supervision of the pastor;
- Approved by the charge conference, the local church's annual governance meeting;
- Assigned 15-20 members of the congregation whose needs and concerns the class leader will be responsible to present to the pastor during monthly meetings.
- Accountable for their own faith commitment by attending weekly meetings of what are called Covenant Discipleship groups.

From now until 1993, pilot programs for class leaders will be active. In 1993, the program will be made available to congregations churchwide.

Information about class leaders and Covenant Discipleship groups can be obtained through the Covenant Discipleship office of the General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

Korean pastor sparks renewal of office

NASHVILLE—The United Methodist Church's renewed emphasis on the office of class leader is due, in large part, to the Rev. Hae Jong Kim.

Dr. Kim says he learned the importance of class leaders at his mother's knee in their native Korea. His mother was a class leader. Although they were very poor, he says, class meetings were held in their one-room house.

Hae Jong Kim

Dr. Kim, now a U.S. citizen and pastor of Bishop Janes United Methodist Church in Basking Ridge, N.J., says he believes the church in Korea grew rapidly because of class meetings.

"Every year the classes had to split," he says, "because they doubled in size.

"The Korean Methodist churches today are very, very large," he says. Some churches have 50,000 members and up to 1,000 classes.

—*DIANE HUIE BALAY*

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

NASHVILLE—Make-up artist Melanie Conner (above) dusts the shine from the face of the Rev. James W. Beal before the nation-wide teleconference on Class Leaders. Mr. Beal was one of several participants on the Cokesbury Satellite Network program that explained the revival of an historic Methodist office. Mr. Beal is superintendent of the Batesville District in the North Arkansas Annual Conference. Below left, Annie Springer is a class leader at Salem United Methodist Church in New York City. The Salem congregation is one of many in the black tradition which retained the office of class leader. Below right, the Rev. David Lowes Watson of Nashville directed a national seminar on class leaders and served as moderator for the teleconference. Mr. Watson said the class leaders will show church members "how to witness to Jesus Christ through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion." (See related articles.)

TV conference kicks off new program

NASHVILLE—The national thrust to recover the tradition of class leaders in local United Methodist congregations (see related article) literally got off the ground May 19 with a 90-minute teleconference.

The Cokesbury Satellite Network linked some 95 viewing parties nation-wide with television studio guests at United Methodist Communications' headquarters in Nashville.

With the Rev. David Lowes Watson moderating, a number of pastors and lay people attending a national seminar on class leaders were interviewed about the possible implications of the program.

Also on the program were representatives of Methodist traditions that have retained class leaders, particularly black churches and mission churches in other countries.

Viewers were invited to use a toll-free number to ask questions.

At the program's conclusion, Dr. Watson answered questions from viewers throughout the country.

—*DIANE HUIE BALAY*

Annie Springer

Longtime class leader embodies faith, service

NASHVILLE—What does it mean to be a class leader? Ask Annie Springer.

For 21 years, Mrs. Springer chose to work the night shift as a New York City hospital desk clerk so she could spend her days helping her class members.

Mrs. Springer is a class leader at Salem United Methodist Church in Harlem. That makes her responsible for helping her class members—ages 10 to 97 years old—grow in faith and in acts of service to the world.

She rumbles throughout the city on public transportation, helping her class members any way she can, whether making arrangements following a death, visiting them in the hospital or cleaning their house.

In Annie Springer's view, that's what it means to be a class leader. It means being a friend.

—*DIANE HUIE BALAY*

David Lowes Watson

Task force backs moving missions board from New York

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A 15-member church-wide task force voted May 21 to recommend that United Methodism's largest program agency be moved from its present site in New York City.

If the recommendation is approved next year by the General Conference—the church's highest policy-making body—the General Board of Global Ministries would become the third major Protestant agency to exit New York within recent years.

United Church of Christ and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies relocated from New York to Cleveland, Ohio, and Louisville, Ky., respectively.

William Randolph Smith, a Houston attorney who chairs the task force, told the Reporter that the committee voted 10-4 to recommend that the board move out of New York. The committee to explore the feasibility of relocating the missions board was authorized by the 1988 General Conference. It consists of three persons from each of the church's five U.S. regional jurisdictional conferences.

Final meeting in September

Mr. Smith said the group will hold its last meeting Sept. 27-29 to complete its report to the 1992 General Conference. At that time, he said, the committee will discuss "whether it wants to recommend a possible site" or whether that decision is properly a part of the group's task.

Based on information prepared for the feasibility task force by the accounting firm of Price Waterhouse, the panel decided that the board could "move and operate at a cost which would be competitive with if not cheaper than the cost of remaining in New York," said Mr. Smith.

He said "different persons said it was economically the thing to do. Some felt with the economic evidence they heard, it [the move] was feasible and it would be better for the church."

Also, "some committee members said the church's mission programs would be better in a different location." Critics of the Global Ministries board have pointed to its New York location as being a primary factor in influencing board policies.

In weighing the feasibility of a move, the panel considered 10 cities as possible alternate sites: Atlanta; Charlotte, N.C.; Chicago; Cleveland; Dallas/Fort Worth; Kansas City, Mo.; Minneapolis/St. Paul; San Francisco; St. Louis; Seattle.

Effie Miller, task force member from Greensboro, N.C., told the Reporter she voted against relocation.

Ethnic inclusiveness good

"I see the church truly at work at its present location because of the city's ethnic inclusiveness" she said. "I have a concern that we may lose some of that if we relocate. We may not find a city that would necessarily have this melting pot of people like New York."

The Rev. Reginald Ponder of Lake Junaluska, N.C., said he based his vote to move the mission board on research gathered by the task force, on reports from other denominations, on a survey of United Methodist missionaries and on statistics of Global Ministries executive personnel hired in the past two years.

"I think it [the proposed move] will strengthen the mission of The United Methodist Church. It will encourage persons who were not as supportive of the Board of Global Ministries as our official mission agency to feel that the general church is responsive to their concern to bring the board back to the church."

Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn, who heads the church's Nebraska Area and is president of the missions board, is recuperating from recent heart bypass surgery and was not available for comment.

Bishop disagrees

However, Bishop Herbert Skeete (Boston Area), one of the board's three vice presidents, said, "I personally don't agree with the vote.

"The church will have to decide whether to move offices around or to respond to human need," said Bishop Skeete. "I hope human need takes priority."

The Rev. Randolph Nugent, general secretary of the board, was not available for reaction to the panel recommendation.

The General Board of Global Ministries has 508 employees—175 executives at the Interchurch Center in New York and 42 executives across the country. The total includes the Church Center for United Nations in New York; a service center in Cincinnati, Ohio, and mission education and finance and field service staff in the church's five U.S. regions.

Predecessors of the mission board were established in 1820 in New York.

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Methodist merger move finds favorable reaction

Religious News Service

Merger of The United Methodist Church and three historic black Methodist denominations is long overdue.

That's the assessment of Bishop Ruben L. Speaks of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

He made the proposal this spring to bishops from the four historic Methodist churches meeting at St. Simons Island, Ga.

His idea seemingly caught on among some of his episcopal peers.

Earlier this month, the United Methodist Council of Bishops approved a request for the 1992 General Conference—the church's highest legislative body—to authorize study of such a merger (see UMR, May 17).

Other Methodist churches are to make similar requests of their governing bodies by 1996.

In addition to the AME Zion Church, the other historic black denominations involved are the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

UM JOINS NCC: The Rev. **Joseph E. Agne,** a clergy member of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference, recently joined the staff of the National Council of Churches in New York. Mr. Agne is program director for racial justice for the multi-denominational council. From 1983 until this year he was a commissioner in the World Council of Churches Program to Combat Racism. He also served eight years as a staff person on the Northern Illinois Conference Council on Ministries. Prior to assuming that post, he served as pastor of several churches, including one "united" congregation embracing four denominations.

LAY MINISTRY: Is lay ministry—church career work for those who elect not to become ordained—making a resurgence? People from nine U.S. and Canadian denominations met recently to discuss that point. The United Methodist leader there, **Rosalie Bentzinger** of the church's Division of Diaconal Ministry, said others expressed "a great deal of interest in what United Methodists are exploring" regarding lay ministry. The committee studying United Methodism's ministry is proposing that the church's top legislative body, the General Conference, in 1992 adopt a model of ministry that would provide for greater recognition of lay ministry. The term proposed is "consecrated lay deacon."

NATIONAL AWARDS: **Jon R. Zemans,** president and chief executive officer of Wesley-on-East residential and health care community in Rochester, N.Y., recently received the 1991 distinguished administrator award from the American College of Health Care Administrators. Under Mr. Zemans' leadership, Wesley-on-the-East was also recognized at the same meeting for excellence in Christian ministry and mission by the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries.

Jon R. Zemans

APPOINTMENT: The Rev. **Nancy Grissom Self,** retiring from the three-person team that heads United Methodism's women's concerns agency, will become pastor of University United Methodist Church in Redlands, Calif., on July 1. Ms. Self is a member of the California-Pacific Annual Conference and has served as part of the general secretariat from the beginning of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women in 1972

KOREAN COALITION: The Rev. **Michael Hahm,** a United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries executive, was recently named founding chairman of the Korea Church Coalition for Peace, Justice and Reunification. The new organization consolidates two groups, the North American Coalition for Human Rights in Korea and the Campaign Committee for Peace and Reunification in Korea. Reunification of North and South Korea is considered of critical importance, to diffuse tensions in Northeast Asia and to reunite the 10 million families who have been separated since the split of Korea into two parts in 1952, Mr. Hahm said.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Churches send 'hold the line' message

General finance agency hears several requests for zero-percent increases

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

A number of grassroots United Methodists—exact number unknown but seemingly growing—are asking the worldwide church to "hold the line" on expenses for 1993-96.

The effort to hold the general-church budget to a "zero-percent increase" over the next four years became clear at the recent General Council on Finance and Administration meeting.

Representatives of at least five of the church's 72 annual (regional) conferences—Louisville, Virginia, North Texas, Tennessee and Florida—appealed to the finance council not to approve increases in "fair-share" askings for general-church programs and administration.

Finance council director Harriet D. Williams of Hueytown, Ala., went even farther. She moved to lower the four-year apportioned total from the proposed $495.6 million (see accompanying story) to $450 million.

Her effort was defeated 24-14.

'Zero-percent' sought

Ms. Williams told United Methodist News Service that some finance-council directors had received letters from their constituents urging them to vote for a zero-percent increase for general church funds.

Among those recent mailings was one from Frank Furman of Pompano Beach, Fla.

Mr. Furman, an insurance agent and Realtor who serves with Ms. Williams and 41 others on the financial agency, distributed copies of studies from the Florida Annual Conference documenting that conference's recent financial strains.

His packet also contains a petition that the Florida conference is expected to send to the 1992 General Conference, asking delegates there to vote to hold the line on general church expenses for 1993-96.

"Two things are happening," Mr. Furman told the Reporter.

"First, the local church isn't coming through [with its full fair share of church expenses]. Second, there's a continuing press for more money for the general church.

"There's a growing underlying question of how much more money [for the general church] is justified."

The Florida conference held its 1991-92 budget to a 1.4 percent increase over 1990-91 but had to take $250,000 from reserves to manage it, Mr. Furman said.

He cited the economic recession and the continuing decline in United Methodist membership as prime factors behind decreasing "fair-share" receipts from local congregations in Florida.

Financial woes

Florida's experience reflects the financial woes expressed by many annual conferences throughout the United States.

Recent reports from annual conferences show declining receipts on "fair-share" askings from local churches.

Rising expenses are typically blamed. Tops among expenses are skyrocketing costs for health care insurance for churches' clergy and lay workers.

Some conferences have projected increases of 30 percent annually in their health insurance rates through 1995.

The Rev. Clifford S. Droke, chief executive of the financial agency and the church's treasurer, said that while annual conferences and local churches are struggling financially, their purchasing power has increased nearly 10 percent since 1973.

That percentage takes into account the effects of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

"We are a church with more purchasing power than we had almost two decades ago," Dr. Droke said. "How people feel about money does not necessarily correlate to how much money there is.

"Local churches also are using a larger share of their money in their local communities," he added.

Churches may be asked for 4% increases

From news and staff reports

SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—Local United Methodist congregations may be asked to pay an average of 4 percent more each year during 1993-96 than they are being asked to pay annually during 1989-92 to fund the church's basic national and international programs.

During their May 12-15 meeting, directors of the church's General Council on Finance and Administration projected $495.6 million as the aggregate amount needed from local churches during the next four-year block to fund such programs.

Local churches' share of general-church askings for the current (1989-92) period are estimated at $417.2 million.

The proposed increased total would be assessed the same as the current one—to local congregations through "fair share" askings.

Each congregation, in addition to being asked to accept "fair share" apportionments to general-church funds, is also asked to accept additional assessments to fund programs of each annual (regional) conference.

The proposed $495.6 million would go to "general church" funds established by the church's highest legislative body, the General Conference, which will meet in May 1992. Currently there are seven such funds:

■ World Service Fund, which underwrites "minimum needs" of the church's general agencies. Last April the church's general planning and coordinating body, the General Council on Ministries, recommended that this "minimum needs" fund receive a 1993-96 budget of $187.6 million. The nine general-church program agencies that receive financial support from this fund had requested more than $250 million.

■ Ministerial Education Fund, the majority of which goes directly to the church's 13 seminaries to provide scholarships, etc.

■ General Administration Fund, which pays expenses of the General Conference, the church's Judicial Council or "high court," special commissions and churchwide administration;

■ Episcopal Fund, which pays salaries and expenses of the church's bishops;

■ Black College Fund, which supports United Methodist-related black colleges and universities;

■ Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, which supports United Methodist ecumenical efforts; and

■ Africa University Fund, which is to provide $10 million for construction of a United Methodist-related university in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe.

Exact allocations to individual agencies out of the "minimum needs" World Service Fund will be determined in December when the program coordinating council and the financial council meet in Chicago to negotiate recommended amounts for action by the General Conference.

Where does money go?

Where does the church's money go?

Statistics from the church's general financial agency show that local United Methodist churches paid out about $3 billion in 1989 (the latest available year) for all purposes—locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Of that amount, about $2.3 billion went for expenses in the local church, said Gary K. Bowen, associate general secretary of the General Council on Finance and Administration.

In contrast, the general agencies of the church received about $116 million.

Mr. Bowen added that the portion of local church expenses going to general-church support has declined steadily since the denomination was formed in 1972.

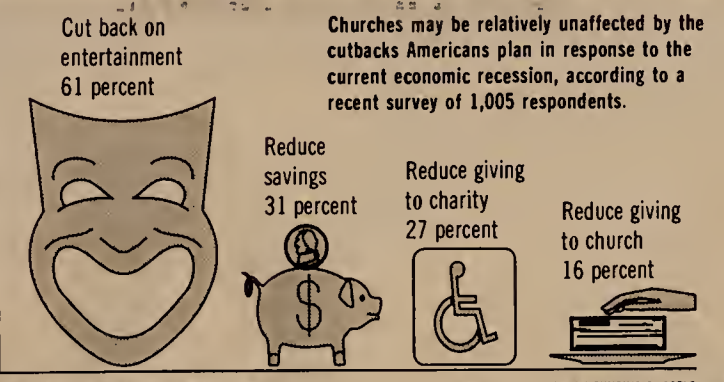
In 1972, about 4½ cents of every locally contributed dollar went to the general church.

In the proposed 1993-96 budget, about 3⅓ cents of every local dollar would go to the general church.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Faith Snapshot

Is weakened economy harming church giving?



Churches may be relatively unaffected by the cutbacks Americans plan in response to the current economic recession, according to a recent survey of 1,005 respondents.

Source: Barna Research Group, Glendale, Calif.

UMR ILLUSTRATION BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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CHILD CARE CENTER DIRECTOR position available. First United Methodist Church of Dallas is currently accepting resumes for the position of Director of the Developmental Learning Center, our fully licensed, NAEYC accredited child care center. Applicants must have Bachelors degree in early childhood development or related field and administrative experience. Resumes should be mailed to: DLC Search, First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross, Dallas, Texas 75201. Position available July 1. Accepting resumes until 6/15.

SEEKING FULL-TIME MINISTER of Youth/Children. Hollywood Hills United Methodist Church, an active, growing congregation, $25,000 plus benefits, beginning August 1, 1991. (305) 989-8304. 400 North 35th Avenue, Hollywood, FL 33021.

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Video builds on 'Let the children come' text

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Baby boomers are returning to church, and their children are leading the way.

Based on that premise, United Methodist Communications (UMCom) has produced a video aimed at congregations that want to grow and serve children more effectively.

"Let the Children Come" features John Westerhoff of United Methodist-related Duke University Divinity School, Durham, N.C., and on-site illustrations of churches effectively working with children in worship, Sunday school and weekday programs.

"We began to develop plans for this video in October with the conviction that churches must serve children more effectively if they want to grow," said Furman York, who heads UMCom's video and film marketing unit, EcuFilm.

"Then came media reports and studies that confirmed our research."

"And the Children Shall Lead Them: Young Americans Return to God" was the cover article in the Dec. 17 "Newsweek."

"At one time or another," the article reported, "roughly two-thirds of baby boomers dropped out of organized religion. But in recent years, more than one-third of the dropouts have returned."

The magazine also reported that the biggest group of returnees (about 60 percent) are married with children. The oldest of the baby boomers are in their 40s.

A survey funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. revealed that 18 million U.S. citizens, mostly baby boomers (between ages 25-45), are returning to the church and that, by and large, their children are leading them back.

With encouragement from research studies and the public media, UMCom producer Vince Isner set out to discover what makes a strong children's ministry. He and his colleagues talked to church leaders, members, adults and children from various-sized congregations that have solid children's ministries.

Mr. Isner said what they discovered was not so much new techniques or methods, but "a philosophy that takes seriously the words of Jesus to 'let the children come' " he said.

One of the video's themes is the integration of worship, Sunday school and weekday ministry into a meaningful whole in which children are not set apart but are part of the church's central vision.

Regarding worship, Dr. Westerhoff says children should not be seen as "different" but as a vital part of the worshiping community.

An ideal picture of worship, he adds, is one where "no one group is sorted out."

Dr. Westerhoff, an Episcopal clergyman, focuses his scholarship and teaching in pastoral theology on Christian formation, spirituality, liturgy and the arts. He has written 23 books translated into six languages; one, "Will Our Children Have Faith?" has become a classic.

The video is recommended for ministers, Christian educators, children's councils, teachers, worship committees and program committees.

"Let the Children Come" is for sale ($29.95) or rental ($18) from EcuFilm, 810 12th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203; telephone, (800) 251-4091).

Youths' video leads to travel afar

United Methodist News Service

A year ago, it was the opening of the Marshall Islands embassy in Washington that a United Methodist layman from southern Illinois and a group of his public school music students visited.

This year it's the Marshall Islands themselves.

Craig Lindvahl, 11 students and four other adults from the Teutopolis, Ill., community will leave June 19 for the mid-Pacific republic to make a half-hour video on the life and culture of the Marshall Island people. The production then will be made available to high schools across the nation through the Peace Corps.

The students are paying their travel expenses of about $30,000. The planned video production is the latest in a chain of events growing out of Mr. Lindvahl's efforts on behalf of international understanding.

He and some of his students in 1989 conceived the idea of a music video supporting world peace and involving young people from the Teutopolis school and its exchange students from other countries. Copies of the brief video were sent to leaders of 167 countries.

One who responded was President Amata Kabua of the Marshall Islands. One of his top aides invited Mr. Lindvahl and students to attend June 1990 ceremonies marking the official opening of the embassy.

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38 NUMBER 2 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 JUNE 7, 1991

Bishop Announces 1991-92 Conference Appointments

Bishop William B. Oden announced the following ministerial appointments during the 21st Louisiana Annual Conference held in Shreveport, June 3-6. The appointments became effective following the closing conference session. Ministers will be in their new appointments on Sunday, June 16.

ACADIANA DISTRICT

District Superintendent ..... C. Gerald Richardson 1
Abbeville-Pecan Island ..... J. Edwin Dilworth 6
Berwick, First ..... David B. Dietzel 5
Briggs ..... (James F. Haynes SLP) 6
Dulac, Clanton Chapel ..... (Cyril A. Verret PTLP) 3
Franklin:
Asbury-Trinity ..... (Robert A. Walmsley FTLP) 1
First-McGowen ..... Richard R. Meek 1
Houma:
First ..... J. Henry Bowdon, Jr. 4
Houma Heights-Gibson ..... (Donald E. MacDonald FTLP) 1
Wesley-Mt. Vernon ..... (James N. Kirk PTLP) 2
Indian Bayou-Kaplan ..... James R. Woodward 2
Jeanerette:
St. Paul-Fitzgerald-Mt. Zion ..... (Fulton A. Raymond, Sr.) 6
St. Peter-Godman ..... (Herbert E. Green, Sr. FTLP) 3
Lafayette:
Asbury ..... William C. Blakely 1
Associate ..... Samuel D. Reeves PM 1
Associate ..... Charles R. Langford 10
Church of the Covenant ..... Brady B. Forman 4
Northwood ..... Robert L. Deich 1
First ..... Ira M. Robinson 7
Associate ..... Thomas E. Dolph 3
Mallalieu-St. James ..... Howard L. Milo 8
Lottie-Rosedale-Krotz Springs ..... (Don Gentry PTLP) 3
Lottie, Green-Wiley ..... (Henry Louis Jones PTLP) 1
Lydia ..... (Bobby Cormier PTLP) 1
Matthews, Memorial-Bayou Blue ..... L. Andy Foreman 8
Melville-Palmetto ..... Kenneth B. Chapman OD 19
Morgan City:
Pharr Chapel ..... Tommy R. Bergeron, Sr. 1
Walmsley-Mason ..... (Dan Washington, Jr. PTLP) 3
Napoleonville, Wesley-Woodlawn ..... (Albert Holland FTLP) 13
New Iberia, First ..... Hugh L. Baker, Jr. 8
New Roads:
First-Port Barre ..... (Fred M. Fraser FTLP) 4
St. Paul-Scott Chapel ..... (Obie J. Southall PTLP) 5
Opelousas:
Louisiana Memorial ..... James H. Humphreys 2
St. Mark ..... Carolyn A. Stokes 3
Patterson ..... Scott T. Bullock PM 2
St. Martinville, Mallalieu-Mt. Zion ..... (Carl Edward Johnson FTLP) 1
Thibodaux:
First-Vacherie ..... Wesley C. Reagan 2
Calvary-Magnolia ..... T.B.S.
Washington, St. Paul-St. James ..... (Leroy Brumfield PTLP) 5

ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

District Superintendent ..... C. Richard Hoffpauir 3
Alexandria:
First ..... Henry C. Blount, Jr. 4
Associate ..... Ronald D. Dauphin 4
Associate ..... Kathryn J. Dauphin 4
Horseshoe Drive-Hineston, Fellowship ..... Eddie E. Morgan, Jr. 2
MacArthur Drive-Melder, First ..... (Lonnie M. Walding FTLP R) 3
Newman ..... Isiah M. Lee, Jr. 3
Trinity-Pleasant Grove ..... (Thomas C. Beeler FTLP) 3
Wilton ..... T.B.S.
Atlanta-Sanders Chapel-Strange ..... (Leon Zordan, Jr. PTLP) 1
Ball-Clear Creek ..... (J. T. Cupples PTLP R) 2
Boyce:
First-Lahey Chapel-Sieper ..... Joe A. Hoover 4
Union-Melder, St. Mark's ..... T.B.S.
Bunkie:
David Haas Mem.-Evergreen-
White's Chapel ..... Charles L. Floyd, Jr. 5
Trinity ..... Helena W. Wright PM 2
Wesley, Booneville ..... (Lance Brown SLP) 2
Campti:
First-St. Maurice ..... Jolly B. Harper R 2
St. Paul-Mt. Zion-Emmanuel-
Cheneyville-St. Paul ..... (Alex Johnson PTLP) 17
Colfax-Hollins Chapel ..... James R. Huber 1
Georgetown, Selma ..... (Nell M. McLemore PTLP) 1
Glenmora-Forest Hill ..... Dorothy M. McGowen 1
Jena, Nolley Memorial-Belah ..... William E. Nolan 1
Jonesville-Bethel ..... (Joseph L. Rountree) 6
Lecompte-Bayou Chicot-Cheneyville ..... James W. Jones 2
Marksville-Oak Grove-Simmesport ..... (Jennie L. Walters) 2
Montgomery-Mt. Zion ..... Sandi B. Huber PM 1
Natchitoches:
Asbury-Williams Chapel-St. Marks ..... James A. Graham 4
College Avenue-Marthaville-Beulah ..... (James B. Moore PTLP) 3
First ..... Conrad P. Edwards 3
Associate ..... J. Ryan Horton, Jr. 6
Oak Grove ..... (J. David Mitchell FTLP) 2
Olla-Urania ..... Cage M. McLemore 1
Palestine ..... William A. Rowell, Jr. 3
Pineville:
First ..... Jimmie D. Pyles 8
Associate ..... Arthur M. Baker R 3
Wesley-St. Mark's, Alex. ..... T.B.S.
Pollock-Liberty Chapel ..... Sherman L. Beird R 2
Provencal-Weaver ..... Abe M. Conerly R 2
Trout, Justiss Memorial-Eden ..... (George K. Reech II SLP) 2
Winnfield-Couley ..... Steven W. Caraway 4

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District Superintendent ..... George W. C. Calvin, Sr. 6
Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area:
Baker ..... Kenneth C. Duke, Sr. 2
Bethel-Deerford ..... John C. Coker, Sr. 3
Blackwater ..... Kirby A. Vining 1
Associate ..... Michael Head PM 2
Broadmoor ..... Charles B. Simmons 2
Associate ..... Kenneth M. Carroll 1
Associate ..... James W. Spitzkeit 8
Associate ..... Michael Wethey OD 1
Associate ..... Joe Donakey PM 1
Camphor Memorial ..... Moses T. Jackson, Sr. 6
First ..... Christopher H. Andrews 3
Associate ..... Gilbert H. Wade, Jr. 8
Associate ..... Lorris M. Wimberly, Jr. 3
Associate ..... Franklin C. Poole 9
Evangeline ..... Carol S. Winn 2
Francis Asbury ..... Manasseh C. Cady 3
Genesis ..... Mary S. Baugh 1
Hartzell-St. Peter ..... (Ernest E. Scott PTLP) 1
Hughes Mem.-Andrews Chapel ..... William J. Miller 22
Ingleside ..... Timothy E. Lawson 2
Jefferson ..... John R. Johns 1
Jordan-LeJeune ..... Clarence L. Hillard 4
Magnolia-St. Paul ..... (Wayne Howington FTLP) 3
Necly ..... Donald R. Avery 20
St. Andrew's ..... Marie P. Williams 1
Associate ..... John N. Williams 1
St. John's ..... Donald K. McDowell 2
St. Luke's ..... Kenneth R. Bowman 3
St. Mark ..... Randall E. Campbell 2
Wesley ..... Freddie C. Henderson 4
William B. Reily Mem. University ..... DeWitt M. Ginn 1
Associate ..... Frank B. Akin PM 1
Zachary:
First ..... James W. Mitchell 3
Jackson Chapel-St. Peter ..... (Oscar L. Brown PTLP) 8
Beech Grove-Moses Chapel ..... (Willie Laws PTLP) 2
Carpenter's Chapel ..... (J. Monroe Wilkes R) 3
Clinton:
Clinton-Clear Creek ..... Rodney Kennedy 3
Mt. Zion-St. Paul ..... (Willie R. Lafayette R) 4
Donaldsonville:
First ..... T.B.S.
St. Peter-Belle Rose, St. James ..... (Donald D. Barrie) 6
Faithful-New River ..... (Jay V. Daigle FTLP) 16
Gonzales-Meadows Chapel ..... William M. Jacocks 5
Jackson-Ethel ..... George B. Cunningham 2
Plaquemine:
First-Grand River ..... Weldon C. Bares 1
Hurst-St. Luke ..... (Thomas A. Wesley SLP) 8
Port Allen, Scott-Shiloh ..... Robert Williams 4
St. Francisville ..... (Harold B. Babin FTLP) 20
Slaughter-Bluff Creek ..... (Darwin Brecheen PTLP) 3
Spillman, New Hope-Concord ..... T.B.S.
Tunica ..... T.B.S.
Wilson, Wesley-Asbury-Mt. Carmel ..... (Joseph E. Moore PTLP) 8

LAKE CHARLES DISTRICT

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DeRidder:
First ..... Richard C. Hebert 2
Wesley-Merryville ..... Alfred C. Bakewell III 1
Elizabeth-Hopewell-Pine Grove ..... (Lionel Marcel) 1
Eunice, First-Iota ..... (John W. Guyre) 3
Fairview-Sweetlake ..... (A. Richard Poss) 3
Gueydan ..... Elswood J. Martin 3
Iowa, First-Hayes ..... Swindell Hodges 1
Jennings, First ..... Clyde W. Averett 2
Kinder-Squyres ..... (Darryl A. Tate FTLP) 1
Lake Arthur ..... (Glynn Foreman FTLP) 1
Lake Charles:
First ..... Grayson B. Watson 4
Min. of Visitation ..... Carl F. Lueg R 12
Oak Park ..... Troy Edward Boyd 5
St. Luke-Simpson ..... Thomas A. Dunbar 7
Associate ..... José Garcia PM 1
University ..... Lael S. Jones 4
Associate ..... Daniel H. Miller PM 1
Warren ..... Larry Martin, Sr. 3
Leesville:
First-Holly Grove ..... Lewis L. Olmsted 10
Korean ..... Chung Baek Kim PM 5
Mt. Zion-Macedonia-Haskins Chapel ..... (Mikel Wiley FTLP) 2
Moss Bluff ..... David R. DeWitt 2
Oakdale-Pine Prairie ..... Louis M. Coppage, Jr. 2
Oberlin-Basile ..... Edwin H. House, Jr. R 1
Florien, Prospect-Hornbeck ..... James C. Skinner R 4
Raymond-Elton ..... Michael L. Hammett PM 4
Rayne, Centenary-Ebenezer-Branch ..... G. Larry Maxwell, Sr. 3
Roanoke-Crowley, Wesley ..... Leon A. Boggs 2
Sulphur:
Henning Memorial ..... Fred B. Wideman 1
Maplewood ..... J. Richard Scott-Welch 1
Wesley-Hackberry ..... M. Ray Holt 5
Vinton, Welsh Memorial ..... A. Fay Barrhartung R 1
Welsh:
First-Jennings, Trinity ..... H. A. Harrington, Jr. 2
Jones-Mallalieu-Trinity ..... Darlene Moore-James PM 1
Westlake ..... Jack D. Phelps 2

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Mt. Olive ..... (Robert Addison FTLP) 2
Beckman-Bartholomew ..... Isaac A. Patton, Jr. R 9
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Kilbourne-Locust Grove ..... (David J. Sheehan FTLP) 1
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Mangham ..... James E. Wilson 3
Monroe:
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Associate ..... Jon E. Tellifero 1
Memorial-Oak Ridge ..... Calvin O. Lapuyade 1
St. James ..... (Davis W. Clark PTLP) 4
St. Mark's ..... Gary L. Van Horn 2
St. Paul ..... (Edward L. Thomas PTLP) 5
St. Paul's ..... W. Odell Simmons 3
Associate ..... (Ronald J. Easterling FTLP) 2
Newellton ..... Kenneth M. Graham 3
Oak Grove-Forest ..... Stephen P. Carter PM 4
Rayville-Holly Ridge ..... Frank M. Jones 4
St. Andrew's ..... James E. Constable 4
St. Joseph-Waterproof-Wesley ..... Donald R. Morgan 4
Sicily Island-Harrisonburg ..... M. Stuart Sherman 2
Tallulah ..... B. Ramon Warren 7
Vidalia ..... Ricky L. Willis PM 2
Washington Circuit ..... (Joe Brown FTLP) 23
West Monroe:
Asbury ..... (John G. Hankins FTLP) 3
Claiborne-Wilhite ..... (Thomas A. Wilson) 3
Faith ..... John L. Vining 3
First ..... William D. Peeples 4
McGuire ..... Michael D. McLaurin 4
Woodlawn ..... T.B.S.
Winnsboro-Gilbert ..... Douglas R. Foreman 3
Wisner-Boeuf Prairie ..... Lillard R. Bevill 3

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Belle Chasse-Marrero, St. James ..... J. Van Dickens III 1
Buras, Trinity-Hope Chapel ..... (Mark E. Crosby FTLP) 5
Chalmette, St. Bernard-Arabi ..... Robert W. Bengtson 5
Convent, St. James-Ninde Chapel ..... (Curtis Johnson PTLP) 3
Destrehan, St. Charles ..... Mark R. Martin 2
Golden Meadow-Grand Isle ..... (Gordon L. Smith, Sr.) 6
Gretna:
Boynton ..... Nathan Daniels, Jr. 1
Gretna ..... Bob L. Lawton 7
Kenner:
First ..... (Robert W. Peterson) 3
Messiah-Gentilly ..... Michael E. Ricke PM 2
Thomas-Hahnville, St. James ..... (James S. Davidson R) 2
LaPlace, First-Lutcher, First ..... (Charles P. Strong) 3
Luling ..... Bobby J. Bowling PM 1
Lutcher Chapel-Gonzales, St. Landry ..... William L. Jones 3
Metairie:
Munholland ..... Robert L. Potter 3
Associate ..... M. Jack O'Dell 3
St. Matthew's ..... William I. Eubanks 3
New Orleans:
Algiers, First ..... Melvin J. Turnage 3
Ashury-St. Matthew ..... Andrew J. Douglas 4
Aurora ..... J. Roddy Taylor 3
Bethany ..... Kenneth M. Fisher 2
Brooks ..... Samuel W. Walker, Sr. R 8
Carrollton-Metairie ..... Leland D. Wade 10
Cornerstone ..... Thomas L. Howe, Jr. 2
Felicity-St. Philip ..... (Marva L. Mitchell FTLP) 3
First ..... Kenneth R. Jones 6
First Street ..... Abraham E. Davis 18
Associate ..... Robert S. Taylor R 8
Grace ..... Nathaniel P. Williams R 5
Hartzell ..... (Guy E. West, Jr. FTLP) 4
Haven ..... Russell L. Jones 14
Jefferson ..... Rebecca D. Conner PM 1
Korean ..... Chang Kyu Lee 8
LaHarpe-Thompson ..... Pereell Church, Jr. PM 2
Lake Vista ..... Alan D. Einsel 5
Mount Zion ..... Leslie P. Norris 7
Napoleon Avenue-Parker Memorial ..... M. Douglas Ezell 3
Peck ..... John D. V. Hamilton 6
Peoples ..... Alfred Pollar 6
Philips Memorial-Shaw Temple ..... (Pereell Church, Sr.) 6
Rayne Memorial ..... Clyde C. Frazier, Jr. 13
Associate ..... Timothy M. Smith PM 2
Ross-Williams ..... (Burnell Bell FTLP) 8
St. Luke's ..... James F. Comer 3
St. Mark's ..... Jeffery D. Conner PM 1
St. Paul ..... James R. Schaub 2
Spanish Ministries ..... Marta L. Sanfiel 3
Trinity-Wesley ..... (Ulysee Stevens PTLP) 3
Trinity-John Wesley ..... Richard T. Stiltner PM 1

NORTH SHORE DISTRICT

District Superintendent ..... H. Warren Blakeman 4
Amite-Independence ..... Kenneth W. Irby 4
Angie, Wesley Ray-Live Oak-Mary's Chapel ..... (Eddie Francis) 4
Bogalusa:
Elizabeth Sullivan Memorial ..... J. Vernon Fairley 1
Thirkield-Harry's Chapel ..... (Wesley R. Cyprian FTLP) 10
Center-Darlington ..... (William R. Boyd PTLP) 6
Corbin ..... (Allan Anderson PTLP) 2
Covington:
First ..... Theo S. Standley 6
Fitzgerald-Waldheim ..... Ester L. Hammond 3
Day's ..... (Johnny Clark PTLP) 2
Denham Springs:
First ..... Steven M. Spurlock 5
Roberts-St. Luke ..... (Wilbur G. C. Davis, Sr.) 3
Franklinton:
Centenary-Fisher ..... Willis W. Dear 6
Winan-Hayes Chapel ..... Terrenee S. August 12
Friendship ..... (Lewis Morris, Jr. PTLP) 2
Greensburg-Wesley Chapel ..... T.B.S.
Hammond, First ..... Charles B. Humphreys 3
Kentwood-Mt. Hermon ..... Barbara S. Duke 2
Lacombe ..... Ellen Alston PM 1
Live Oak ..... John E. Scarf 3
Livingston ..... J. Penn Morgan 2
Loranger-Cooper's Chapel ..... (Percy M. Frazier PTLP) 8
Mandeville, St. Timothy-on-the-
North Shore ..... J. Lawrence Maddin 5
Mangum-James Chapel ..... (Mike Polk PTLP) 2
Montpelier ..... T.B.S.
Pearl River ..... (Gene M. Faurie FTLP) 1
Ponchatoula:
First-Lee's Landing ..... Larry D. Robertson 3
Wesley Chapel ..... Edwin J. Barksdale R 6
Slidell:
Aldersgate ..... Cliff C. Wright, Jr. 2
Associate ..... Bryan S. Dauphin PM 2
First ..... Joe W. McClain 1
Associate ..... Gary D. Willis 3
Hartzell Mt. Zion ..... Alonzo J. Campbell 2
Springfield:
First-Huff Chapel-Maurepas ..... (Paul C. Singlegary, Sr.) 1
St. James-Newell ..... (Louis A. Smith PTLP) 2
Talisheek ..... T.B.S.
Tangipahoa-Pine Ridge ..... C. Jeffrey Duke 2
Tickfaw, Nesom Memorial-Pine Grove ..... (E. Rand Guy PTLP) 2
Varnado-Sun-Bush ..... Karl D. Wood 22
Walker ..... Melissa L. Draper 2

RUSTON DISTRICT

District Superintendent ..... James M. Poole 3
Ansley-Antioch ..... (Homer V. Bailes R) 1
Arcadia-Mt. Mariah ..... Douglas B. deGraffenried 3
Athens-Crossroads ..... Cleburne W. Quaid R 7
Bernice-Beech Grove-Summerfield ..... Carolyn P. Volentine 1
Calhoun-Beulah-Indiao Village ..... Martio W. Corie PM 2
Centerpoint-Concord ..... Robert E. Townsend 2
Chatham ..... (Owen H. Peyton FTLP) 1
Choudrant-Douglas ..... Raymond M. Crofoot R 2
Clay ..... T.B.S.
Cotton Valley-Pleasant Valley ..... (Rhonda E. Feurtado FTLP) 1
Downsville-Bethel-Mt. Nebo ..... Stephen R. Williamson 5
Doyline-Sibley ..... Kibbie E. Hatfield 5
Duhach ..... Merlin W. Merrill R 8
Eros-Antioch ..... (T. Lynn Malone, Jr. SLP) 1
Farmerville ..... Larry D. O'Dell 2
Gibsland-Oak Grove ..... (R. Michael Townsend FTLP) 1
Harmony Chapel-Arizona ..... (L. Alton Peel, Sr. FTLP) 2
Haynesville-Shongaloo ..... Byrd L. Terry 3
Heflin-Brushwood ..... (Judith D. Bazer PTLP) 3
Hodge-Dodson-New Hope ..... Randall B. Scrivener 2
Homer-Wesley Chapel ..... Terry C. Willis 2
Jonesboro ..... (George A. McVay) 3
Lishon ..... (John R. Oldham R) 5
Marion-Bird's Chapel ..... (Bryant E. Gore FTLP) 3
McIntyre ..... (William J. Maxey PTLP) 4
Minden:
First ..... Carl E. Rhoads, III 2
Lakeview ..... J. Thomas Logan 2
Pilgrim Rest ..... Quinton J. Gibson 1
Pine Grove-Bethlehem ..... (Joseph H. Windham PTLP) 7
Quitman-Bienville ..... (Leo L. Beck R) 3
Ringgold-Castor ..... Steven J. Porter 2
Ruston:
Faith-Wesley Chapel ..... Walter L. Parr, Jr. 1
Grace ..... Larry G. Miller 7
Trinity ..... Byrl J. Moreland 1
Associate ..... M. Rolly Walker 13
Simsboro:-Salem ..... (Lloyd E. Scott FTLP) 6
Springhill-Sarepta ..... Terral T. Lowe 3
Whitehall-Colquitt-Evergreen ..... (Joe E. Hunter PTLP) 4

SHREVEPORT DISTRICT

District Superintendent ..... L. Ray Branton 4
Benton ..... Robert A. Weber 5
Bradford Chapel ..... (Lee C. Jennings R) 2
Coushatta-Wesley Chapel ..... Robert I. Galatas 4
Cross Roads-Hall Summit ..... William V. Sirman R 4
Greenwood-Bethany ..... Howard B. Childs 1
Hosston-Gilliam ..... Douglas E. Milliron PM 2
Ida ..... Robert E. Carter R 2
Keatchie-Shiloh-McDonald ..... (Jarrell R. Morgan FTLP) 4
Logansport-Bethel ..... (Loretta N. Lampkin FTLP) 1
Longstreet ..... T.B.S.
Mansfield:
First-Grand Cane ..... Richard H. Humphries 2
Wesley-Shady Grove ..... S. Charles Byrd OD 2
Many-Bayou Scie ..... Larry D. Norman 3
Mooringsport-Oil City ..... (Fred B. Moore, Jr.) 2
New Light ..... T.B.S.
Plain Dealing-Walker's Chapel ..... Jack S. Winegeart 5
Pleasant Hill-Mitchell-Pelican ..... Roy E. Mouser R 4
Pleasant Valley-Mt. Zion-Bonchest-
Fairview ..... (Oscar E. Player) 2
Rodessa ..... (Linda K. Shepherd PTLP) 2
Vivian ..... Burton F. Blair 2
Zwolle-Converse-Noble ..... Richard O. Teeter 3
Shreveport-Bossier City:
Ashury ..... Jerry G. Hilbun 3
Barksdale ..... Paul D. Davis 3
Blanchard ..... (Ellen B. Montegudo SLP) 3
Bossier City, First ..... R. Larry Stafford 1
Associate ..... (H. Austin Smith R) 4
Associate ..... William A. Moon, III PM 1
Broadmoor ..... W. Dwight Ramsey 3
Associate ..... David F. Fortuna 4
Associate ..... George F. Pearce, Jr. R 10
Associate ..... Benediet A. Galloway R 4
Caddo Heights ..... Rupert D. Coles R 1
Cedar Grove-Belcher ..... Mickey D. Stringfield 1
Christ ..... Ray R. Spiller 1
Associate ..... A. Trent Palmer, III PM 3
Ellerbe Road ..... (James A. VanHook, Jr. PTLP) 1
Fairfield-Faith ..... (Willie E. Jackson, Jr. FTLP) 3
Fellowship ..... Gregory R. Davis 2
Keithville ..... Clifford N. McCall OD 3
Lakeview ..... Douglas L. Cain 6
Love Chapel-Haughton ..... (John H. Lavo) 4
Mangum ..... Paul C. Carroll, Sr. 1
Morningside ..... E. Benjamin Fant 4
Mt. Zion-Jewella-Rosa-James Ch-
St. Matthew ..... (Oscar Tippin, Jr. FTLP) 1
Noel ..... T. Nichols Evans, Jr. 2
Associate ..... W. Scott Adams 3
Associate ..... Garland C. Dean, Jr. R 4
North Highlands ..... James R. McLelland 2
St. James-Round Grove ..... Arnold V. Brown 4
St. Luke's ..... A. Wayne Evans 2
St. Paul-Johnson Chapel ..... George L. Thomas 2
Shreveport:
First ..... John E. Fellers 8
Associate ..... Robert L. Burgess 2
Associate ..... Steven R. Kelly 4
Associate ..... Wyatt D. Boddie R 9
Associate ..... William F. Mayo R 6
Summer Grove ..... Steven D. Bearden 3
Associate ..... Robert B. Crichlow, Sr. R 8
Associate ..... (Terry Love SLP) 2
Trinity ..... (Carl D. Munyon PTLP) 2

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS WITHIN CONNECTIONAL STRUCTURE

Conference Staff
Exec. Director of Administration/
Treasurer ..... Stone W. Caraway BR 1
Exec. Director of La. Meth. Foundation ..... Kenneth R. Reed BR 2
Exec. Director of Council on Ministries ..... Donald C. Cottrill BR 2
Assoc. Dir. Council on Ministries ..... Roger D. Lathan BR 2
Director, Educational & Worship Min., COM ..... Leslie N. Akin PM BR 1
Director of CrossLines Ministry, COM ..... Elizabeth T. Irvine OD BR 4

Directors of Parish Development
Director NO Metro Ministries ..... William L. Jones NO 3
Director, Center for Pastoral
Effectiveness ..... John M. Winn, Jr. LC 2

Staff of General Agencies
Area Secy., General Board of
Global Ministries ..... Julius Jefferson LC 4

Missionaries
United Theological College, Bangalore, India ..... Carlos A. Welch AL 5

Faculty and Administrators of United Methodist Theological Schools and Other Educational Institutions
Asst. Dean of the Chapel/Dir. Rel. Life,
Duke Univ. ..... Debra K. Brazzel AC 1
Assoc. Director, CSC Program, Centenary ..... Wilson H. Brent S 6
T. L. James Prof. of Rel./Chap., Centenary College ..... Robert Ed. Taylor S 31
Asst. Dean for Admission & Comm.
Life, Perkins, SMU ..... Linn M. Caraway S 10
Director, CSC Program, Centenary ..... K. Dale Hensarling S 3
Director, Washington Theological
Consortium ..... David G. Trickett NO 4
President, Gammon Theological Seminary ..... Alfred L. Norris NO 7
Prof. of Social Ethics,
Candler School Theology ..... Theodore R. Weber NO 37
Instr. in Systematic Theol.,
Perkins School Theology ..... Millicent C. Feske NO 2
Prof./Teaching Min.,
Iliff School Theology ..... Clarence H. Snelling, Jr. NO 28

APPOINTED ACROSS CONFERENCE LINES

Associate Pastor, First, Dallas, GA ..... Heide Erin Davis BR 2
Associate Pastor, St. Stephen, Amarillo, Tx. ..... Kurt F. Oheim R 1
Emory University, Campus Min.,
Atlanta, Georgia ..... Herbert M. Scott S 4

CAMPUS MINISTERS

Grambling State University ..... Quinton J. Gibson R 1
Louisiana Tech Wesley Foundation ..... Andrew R. Hurst R 1
McNeese University ..... Wayne G. Taylor LC 10
Northeast Louisiana University ..... James E. Wilson M 23
Northwestern Louisiana University ..... J. Ryan Horton Jr. AL 6
Southeastern Louisiana University ..... M. Eugene Finnell NS 5
Southern University ..... McKinley Franklin BR 1
TUCM-LSU ..... Randall K. Nichols BR 9
Tulane University ..... John M. Higginbotham, Jr. NO 4
University of Southwestern Louisiana ..... R. Don Ross AC 14
UNO-SUNO-Delgado ..... Dale E. Branch NO 2

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS TO EXTENSION MINISTRIES

Armed Forces And Veterans Administration Chaplaincy
Coordinator Treatment Ctr., Outpatient Gen. Psy. Serv.,
Vet. Admin. Hosp., New Orleans ..... Clarence G. Fuller NO 12
U S Army ..... Willie Lee Henry NO 18
U S Navy ..... Robert G. Rowland R 17
U S Navy ..... Louis Augustine, III AL 4
U S Air Force ..... John G. Whitley BR 8
Veterans Admin., Alexandria ..... Thomas M. Babington, III AL 25

Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy
Dixon Correctional Institute ..... Bertrand Griffin BR 15

Health Care Fields, Community Service Organizations And Other Related Ministries
Assistant Administrator United Methodist
Children's Home OK ..... Douglas T. Williams, Jr. R 7
Dir. of Development, MCH, Ruston ..... August E. Aamodt R 6
Chaplain/Dir. Christian Education, MCH Ruston ..... William H. Willis R 3
Past. Couns. Joseph Bolen Associates, Sprfld, IL ..... Roy B. Nash NO 2
Chaplain/Dir. Past. Care.
Pendleton Mem. Meth. Hospital ..... Paul G. Durbin NO 16
Chaplain, East La. St. Hospital, Jackson ..... Walter C. Worthy BR 21
Chaplain/Past. Counselor, Ecumenical Center for
Religion & Health,
San Antonio, TX ..... Maria J. Kennedy NO 5
Chaplain, Pendleton Memorial
Methodist Hospital ..... Judy E. Nelson NO 10
Chaplain, SC Dept. Youth Services ..... Howard D. Ellzey BR 19
Chaplain, Lady of the Lake Hosp., BR ..... Martha W. Pleasant PM BR 1
Director Community Relations/Chaplain, Methodist
Home of New Orleans ..... Kathy Clark-Dickens NO 1
Director Peoples Community Center ..... (Guy E. West Jr. FTLP) NO 5
Dir., Istrouma Metrop. Meth. Miss. Ctr ..... Stephen C. Fleming BR 2
Admin., Foss Home, Seattle, Washington ..... Jay P. Irby S 2
Director of Outreach Services, MCH, Ruston ..... Robert E. Townsend R 3
Samaritan Counseling Ctr., Shreveport ..... Charles B. Roper S 4
Scope Ministries, Opelika, AL ..... John Howard Sewell BR 5
Therapist, River Region Hospital
E. Jeff Hosp., Metairie ..... Richard D. Gillespie, Jr. AC 1
Wesley Com. Ctr. Atlanta, GA-GBGM ..... William Craig Taylor NO 9

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS BEYOND THE MINISTRY USUALLY EXTENDED THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH

Asst. Dean of Students, U. of Wisc ..... William Douglas McLean R 7
Exec. Dir. Creative Min. Assoc., Durham NC ..... Cathy S. Carlson M 16

SPECIAL APPOINTMENT TO OTHER VALID MINISTRIES

Evergreen Ministries ..... R. Stephen Casey S 2

Appointed to Attend School
Perkins School of Theology ..... Karen E. Albano PM LC 1
St. Paul School of Theology ..... Brian R. Barron PM R 1
Duke Divinity School ..... Lyndle R. Bullard PM BR 1
Gammon Theological Seminary ..... Macky R. Giles PM S 1
St. Paul School of Theology ..... Daniel P. Gleason PM S 2
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary ..... Barry Hockstra PM S 1
Perkins School of Theology ..... Deborah Drash NS 2
Perkins School of Theology ..... Barry E. Hughes PM S 1
Gammon Theological Seminary ..... Marcell A. Johnson PM AC 1
Perkins School of Theology ..... Wybra J. Price, II PM AC 1
Ashury Theological Seminary ..... Terilynn Russ PM AC 1
Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, N.C., C.P.E. ..... S. Kemper Smith LC 1
University of Texas, Arlington ..... M. Theresa McConnell AL 1

DISABILITY LEAVE

Disability Leave ..... Raymond DeLaughter S 9
Disability Leave ..... (Daniel M. Grove, Jr.) S 6
Disability Leave ..... Sidney Earl Irving AL 11
Disability Leave ..... D Dale Lyons BR 9
Disability Leave ..... (S. Alvin Mayo FTLP) R 4
Disability Leave ..... Daniel W. Tohline R 6

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of Absence ..... Richard L. Behling AC 4
Leave of Absence ..... David C. Billings, Jr. NO 3
Leave of Absence ..... L. Chris Curry BR 1
Leave of Absence ..... Douglas L. Davis AL 3
Leave of Absence ..... Juliet P. Deschner PM AC 1
Leave of Absence ..... Miles T. Holladay PM S 5
Leave of Absence ..... Jayne Trammell-Kelly S 2
Leave of Absence ..... Reginald A. Monson LC 1
Leave of Absence ..... Robert K. Martin PM AL 2
Leave of Absence ..... Kathy H. Schaffhauser BR 3

DIACONAL MINISTERS

Minister of Christian Ed., St. Luke's Shreveport ..... Charlotte Brent S
Director of Music, Trinity, Ruston ..... Roger Michael Cloud R
Director of Christian Ed., Munholland ..... Lylln Guth Craig NO
Director of Christian Ed., Lake Vista ..... Barbara C. Einsel NO
Director, Child Development & Membership Cult
University, B.R. ..... Linda Fox BR
Director Conf. Rel/Div of Diac Min, Nashville ..... Joaquin Garcia M
Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Oakdale ..... Norma Garlington LC
Director of Christian Ed., Natchitoches, First ..... Patricia Haulk Hogan AL
Director of Music, Bossier City, First ..... Sidney Montegudo S
Director of Christian Ed., Shreveport, First ..... Doris Sheppard S
Social Worker, MCH, Ruston ..... Michelle Townsend R

TRANSFERRED IN

Ellen R. Alston ..... 6-6-91 ..... Little Rock Conf.
Joe M. Donakey PM ..... 6-1-91 ..... Missouri East Conf.
Quinton J. Gibson ..... 6-6-91 ..... Central Texas Conf.
Richard Stiltner ..... 6-6-91 ..... Little Rock Conf.

TRANSFERRED OUT

George R. Holcombe ..... 6-1-90 ..... North Texas Conf.
Robert J. Wagener ..... 7-1-90 ..... Cal.-Nev. Conf.
Louis Augustine, III ..... 8-1-91 ..... Cent. Texas Conf.
Gregory L. Bushway PM ..... 6-20-91 ..... S. Georgia Conf.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Games-as-God: Perilous idolatry

Two thumbs up for the Cranston (Rhode Island) Clergy Association!

Its members, Christians and Jews, have raised a holy ruckus this spring about a thorny issue: Little League baseball games scheduled during times traditionally reserved for religious services.

As a result of scheduling conflicts, parents have faced a "pray or play" dilemma and Cranston churches and synagogues have suffered a sharp dropoff of attendance among youths.

Religious leaders have responded vigorously via sermons and newspaper ads urging parents to protest the scheduling of games during either the Christian or Jewish Sabbath.

"We're not anti-sports," said the president of the Cranston clergy group. "We're saying there's a spiritual side of a human being that's also important."

We agree.

It should be possible for one to be a sports enthusiast and/or participant without short-changing the development of one's spiritual life.

In reality, however, sports at all levels in our society—from Little League to the big leagues—have come to function as a pseudo-religion for vast numbers of people.

In the "religion" which is sports, winning is god, cut-throat competition is the way of life, and "stars" are its saints and role models.

Particularly pernicious is the willingness to baptize sports uncritically as being "good clean fun" and a way to "build character." Sports can have such qualities, but not to the exclusion or diminution of other character-building experiences such as Sunday worship.

Yet, fueled by non-stop commercial hype, sports-as-religion sometimes can cause even dedicated Christians to lose perspective.

Friends, we're talking about games—albeit games that are big business. But they're still games!

As Christians, we should expand on the lead of the Cranston Clergy Association and label the rampant substitution of games for God in our society for what it is: Idolatry that imperils individual souls and threatens to destroy the fabric of society.

Specifically, a games-as-God outlook promotes a trivial, win-lose vision of life that is contrary to God's vision for humanity.

By contrast, Christian experience confirms the wisdom of Scripture: "Seek first the kingdom of God . . . and all things will be given to you . . ."

As Christians, that doesn't mean that we cannot enjoy sports, including pulling for our teams to win.

But it does mean that we'll avoid confusing the outcomes of our ultimately trivial games with the ultimately serious business of God's Kingdom, where no one is willed to be a loser.

And it means that we should be prepared to join the Cranston Clergy Association with an unequivocal repudiation of sporting events scheduled in competition with one's community of faith at worship.

FaithLine

A church-wide task force has recommended that United Methodism's mission agency move from New York City (see UMR, May 31). The panel considered 10 cities as possible alternatives.

Is the location of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries (national and world mission board) an important concern for you? Why or why not?

Tell us what you think by leaving a 45-second (maximum) recorded message on the Reporter's FaithLine answering machine.

Call (214) 630-6499 by midnight, June 12.

Letters to the Editor

'Too nice God' editorial hit me between eyes!

The May 24 editorial headlined, "Is your God too nice?", hit me right between the eyes. There are few articles in any paper that would generally elicit a "Praise the Lord," but that editorial did it!

It was so refreshing to read an editorial that so boldly lifts up a really tragic element in our United Methodist theology as it is now expressed. We have lost sight of a vital image of God.

We cannot expect people to believe anything different when the church is the teacher of such drivel that causes God to be perceived as a God who looks upon all behavior with a "kids will be kids" attitude.

I've noted, as a user of the Common Lectionary, that the passages which express some kind of judgmental position are often omitted from the readings. Those in which God does more than give a love tap for disobedience seem somehow to have been overlooked.

It seems to me that we really need to recapture the image of the awesome, Holy God who caused David and others like him to fall on their faces in holy fear before His presence. Until God is seen once again as the God who critically views our lives and impartially passes judgment on us, we cannot hope to truly rejoice in the grace abundantly poured out from Calvary.

The Reporter deserves a greater reading audience. Keep up the good work.

James Jameson
Glyndon, Minnesota

Editorial was a 'light'

Your May 24 editorial headlined, "Is your God too nice?", is a light at the end of a long tunnel for the United Methodist Church.

God bless you for bringing what the Bible says to us to the surface.

These are things in His all-knowing love that God demands of us. If we as earthly children are to try and follow Jesus' example, we also need to stand up for His words and teachings and be united.

On related matters, both of the letters to the editor in the May 24 issue addressed issues of critical importance to the witness of our church to the world today. Today's moral issues of adultery, alcohol and homosexuality are being given lip service and little positive action. Unless we regain the family as God sanctioned it, we may be doomed.

Again, many thanks for your words and works.

Winston Ewing
West Plains, Missouri

Pilgrimages encouraged

A recent "Here I Stand" encouraged Christians to refrain from pilgrimages to the Holy Land until the legitimate grievances of Palestinians have been resolved (see UMR, April 19 and May 10).

I write in response to that letter to say that a request has come to those who sponsor such pilgrimages to the Middle East from most of the church leaders in the Middle East, imploring Christians to resume pilgrimages as soon as possible.

Palestinian people, including Palestinian Christians, have suffered intense economic deprivation because of the inability of Western Christians to travel to the land of the Bible during the time of conflict related to the Gulf War.

I was privileged to represent the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church on an episcopal visitation to the Middle East Council of Churches in January, 1990.

While there I met most of the church leaders who have issued the appeal for us to resume travel to Israel and Palestine.

William Boyd Grove
Charleston, West Virginia

The fish really cried!

I feel there must be a statement made regarding the "First Annual Faith and Fish Conference" advertised in the May 24 issue.

First, I must tell you that for many years I was an avid fisherman (fisherwoman) until the day I cast my line out in Beaver Lake, Arkansas, and hooked a catfish in the eye!

I got the fish to the boat and tried to get the hook out, and as God is my witness, that fish was crying! I had already begun to have serious qualms, first putting a live worm on my hook, then catching small perch on that worm bait, to use for bait for the larger fish!

I was actually torturing three of God's creatures in order to get one fish of sufficient size to keep!

Over the years, many stories have been written about fish not having a sensory system, so that hooks don't hurt them. All I can say to that theory is, baloney! Why would the good Lord have especially exempted any one of his creatures from feeling pain, or joy, for that matter.

And to those who remind me of biblical stories of the fishermen throughout those times, let me remind them that those fish were caught in nets and not on wicked, cruel hooks!

Eula M. Hamilton
Nacogdoches, Texas

Here I Stand

Christians need better grasp of Israeli-Palestinian conflict

By JOHN R. REGIER

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. John R. Regier is a member of Harvard-Epworth United Methodist Church in Cambridge, Mass. (Southern New England Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

It has long been fashionable in United Methodist circles to criticize Israel, and I have long regretted that most of the critics have failed to display any contextual understanding of Israeli history or of the importance of Israel in Jewish life.

Recently, however, the tone of the criticism seems to have sharpened, and I fear that many members of our church are simply unaware of the complexities that surround the Palestinian question.

One need not agree with the policies of the Israeli government (after all, Israelis themselves are evenly divided about them) to lament this reflexive anti-Israel bias.

Place policies in context

Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza cannot be understood without placing them in the context of the repeated military attacks that Arab states have made against Israel since its founding in 1948.

As Christians, we do more harm than good when we attack Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza without acknowledging why Jews in Israel and around the world are concerned about Israel's safety.

Why is the West Bank occupied? Because Israel has been attacked repeatedly by Arab states bent on its devastation.

Why does it remain occupied? Because, with the single exception of Egypt, those states continue to threaten Israel—armed, unrepentant, defiant and officially at war. (The rulers of those states, it should be noted, have consistently treated Palestinians as pawns).

Although many Arabs have learned to moderate their criticisms of Israel when talking to the Western media, the same people speak virulently in the Arab press, repeatedly calling for Israel's destruction.

For centuries Jews have been persecuted, mostly by Christians. We have much to repent. At long last, as a safe haven for the victims and potential victims of such persecution, a Jewish state was created in their ancient homeland, too late to save the millions of Jews who perished in the Holocaust but in time to ensure that it would not be repeated. Christians who do not regularly travel in Jewish circles owe it to themselves to learn how Jews feel about Israel, and why.

Borders will remain unclear

Under international law, the precise location of Israel's borders will remain unclear until it is able to negotiate treaties with all of its neighbors.

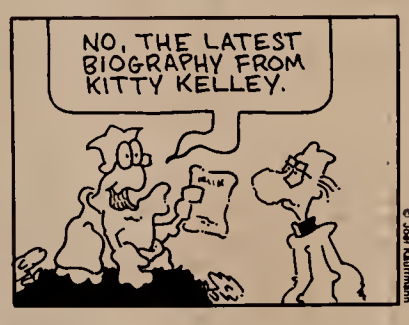
Having rejected the 1948 United Nations resolution establishing Jewish and Palestinian states in the region, Arab states tried vainly for years to eliminate Israel by force of arms.

The pre-1967 borders of Israel were established by temporary armistice agreements in 1949. The true meaning of the 1967 and 1973 United Nations resolutions is not a simple "land for peace" arrangement to return to the pre-1967 borders but, rather, that the states in the Middle East are obliged to negotiate settlements ensuring Israel's right to "live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."

It is disingenuous at best for American United Methodist critics to imply that Israel conquered the West Bank and Gaza as a military aggressor, or to ignore the current military threat that Israel faces.

There is much to criticize in the occupation policies of the current Israeli government, but for criticism to be effective, it must take into account the legitimate concerns of Israeli citizens and of Jews around the world for the survival of Israel.

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"The telling of stories and the raising of questions are central to the 'ministry of the word.' "
—Kay Lukins, editor, Michigan Christian Advocate

* * *

"The world needs more than the secret holiness of individual inwardness. It needs more than sacred sentiments and good intentions. God asks for the heart because [God] needs [our] lives . . . God asks for the heart, and we must spell our answer in terms of deed."
—Abraham Joshua Heschel, in "Covenant Discipleship Quarterly."

* * *

"I might, as an individual, practice pacifism, but can 'turn the other cheek' become a cornerstone of national policy? Probably not. The nonviolence of Christ did not prevent him from being hanged on the cross. Loving enemies does not ensure they will become our friends."
—Retired United Methodist Bishop Emerson Colaw, in "Social Issues, A Bishop's Perspective."

* * *

"Ministry is not restricted to the pulpit. Anything you do in the name of the Lord is your ministry, which should be trying to make available to other people the love and knowledge of God. Christianity is not quietistic; you have to be engaged in behalf of people."
—The Rev. Lawrence N. Jones, outgoing president, Howard University Divinity School, Washington.

* * *

"I cannot learn to love my neighbor as myself until I learn to love God. I cannot learn to love God except by learning to obey God. As I learn to obey God and honestly do the will of God, I will experience more and more the wonder of the Holy Spirit. The living of a life guided by the Holy Spirit will bring with it its own power and courage."
—Gwen Stieber, UM laywoman, Rocky Mountain Conference.

* * *

"One person's hands can't build a better world. Two people's hands can't build a better world. But if two plus two plus 50 make a million, you'll see that day come 'round."
—Environment song taught by UM laywoman Colene Gleason, Clarks Summit, Pa.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (RSV).

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : _____

(Last week's answer: 1 Corinthians 2:9)

Readings for week of June 7
Monday: Psalms 57:1-3
Tuesday: Psalms 57:4-11
Wednesday: 1 Samuel 16:14-23
Thursday: Mark 3:20-30
Friday: Mark 3:31-35
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 4:13-15
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1

The United Methodist REPORTER

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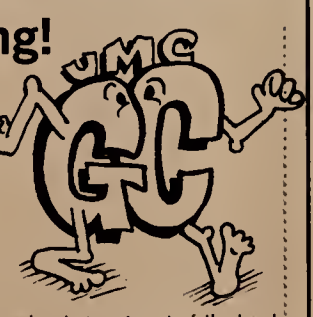

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Faith watch

PROTEST GOES QUIETLY: Under the protective eyes of plainclothes police and SWAT teams, 100 worshipers gathered at Lyman (S.C.) United Methodist Church May 25 in a service protesting a visit by the Ku Klux Klan to the Lyman-Duncan community. After a conference with law enforcement officials, a proposed "silent witness" walk by worshipers was canceled. About 20 worshipers, however, handed out copies of the New Testament near the 25 Klan members.

WESLEY ANTHOLOGY: Two books related to the sermons of John Wesley, released in June by Abingdon Press, include work by the late **Albert C. Outler**, one of the world's foremost Wesleyan scholars. "John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology," a 496-page selection, uses the texts established by Dr. Outler in the first four volumes of the critical series, "The Works of John Wesley." Dr. Outler edited those four volumes between 1984 and his death in 1989. The volume also reflects later scholarship of Wesley's notes, and includes brief introductions to the sermons prepared by **Richard P. Heitzenrater** and an overview of the development of Wesley's thought. Dr. Heitzenrater, now general editor of "The Works," decoded the diaries of John Wesley, founder of Methodism.

Albert Outler

TITLE CASE IN COURT: A congregation in Lyons, Colo., that is fighting with the United Church of Christ over ownership of property has taken its case to the Colorado Supreme Court. Meanwhile, delegates to the UCC's Rocky Mountain Conference reaffirmed the denomination's action to take control of the real estate. The property in dispute includes the church building and associated real estate of the 150-member Old Stone Congregational Church in Lyons, a village 40 miles from Denver. Denomination officials in Colorado laid claim to the property after Old Stone, angered by the denomination's stands on social issues, ended its financial support of the Rocky Mountain Conference and stopped sending delegates to official church meetings.

SCIENTOLOGY AS 'BUSINESS': The author of a controversial "Time" magazine cover story that denounced the Church of Scientology as a "cult of greed" says the magazine "approached it as a business story, not as a religion story." The May 6 article has been denounced as a "hatchet job" not only by Scientology but by such Christian scholars as the Rev. **Dean M. Kelley**, counselor on religious liberty for the National Council of Churches, and the Rev. **Franklin H. Littell**, a founder of the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches (see Reporter, May 31). Richard Behar, who wrote the article, told Religious News Service that "the point of the story was to alert people to the dangers of Scientology."

Franklin Littell

'NORTHERN' BAPTISTS MEET: Over 3,000 representatives of the American Baptist Churches, the "northern" branch of the church which split in 1845 over the issue of slavery, will converge June 18-21 in Charleston, W. Va., for the denomination's biennial meeting. The chief policy-making body of the 1.5-million-member denomination is its General Board. The biennial meeting is responsible for issuing "statements of concern." On that agenda are such items as "Respect for Different Views on Abortion," "American Baptists—Our Denominational Identity" and "A Holistic Perspective on Human Sexuality."

JOBLESS SUPPORTED: The U.S. Catholic bishops have joined with a major labor union and a liberal think tank in calling attention to the millions of jobless Americans who have been left to fight the recession without any unemployment insurance benefits. The Catholic hierarchy, which has supported unemployment insurance since the early decades of this century, appealed for an overhaul of the system in a joint letter to House Speaker Thomas Foley (D-Wash.). Joining the U.S. Catholic Conference in the call are the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Facing death while helping the Kurds

By MARY EDLUND

Lois Purdham has prepared herself for the scenes of death she will inevitably face.

Ms. Purdham, a native of Minnesota and a United Methodist, recently joined international relief efforts for Kurds in the Middle East.

She is deputy director of Southeast Asian refugee programs for The Experiment in International Living, a Vermont-based educational organization.

She will spend three months working with the estimated half-million Kurds now living in tent settlements in Turkey.

Ms. Purdham is the daughter of the Rev. Charles and Alice Purdham of Brooklyn Center, Minn.

"I get excited and then I think 'Oh, my God,'" Ms. Purdham told the Minnesota Conference edition of the Reporter.

Working under auspices of the Connecticut-based Save the Children organization and UNICEF, she will help set up programs to improve health, sanitation and water supplies in the 15 encampments scattered along Turkey's border with Iran and Iraq.

"I have had a lot of experience in refugee camps, but I've never had to face death," she said.

"The camps I've worked in were more stabilized; you're not facing death every moment.

"The biggest issues are lack of water and sanitation. We will evaluate the needs in the camps and then help set up systems to bring equipment and people in."

Ms. Purdham left the states with a sleeping bag and backpack containing head-scarves and long-sleeved blouses to comply with local Islamic custom, some jeans and some dress-up clothes for the capital city of Ankara.

"I'm taking hiking boots and heels," she said, laughing. "I could be doing anything."

Ms. Purdham says the decade she has spent working with refugees has taught her much about life.

"I find them a testimony to the strength of the human spirit. Seeing what they have overcome and lived through successfully is a humbling experience."

Ms. Edlund is editor of the Minnesota Conference edition of the Reporter.

Lois Purdham
. . . helping the Kurds

Kids' mission-education kit links U.S., Africa

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A mission education kit for children released this month links children in this country with United Methodist mission programs in two West African countries.

The kit, called "For God's Children," is sponsored by Operation Classroom, a partnership program of Indiana Area United Methodists and United Methodist annual conferences of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The kit's centerpiece is a coloring book created by the Rev. John Dicken, pastor of Waynedale United Methodist Church in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Officials of Operation Classroom say the coloring book enables children ages 4-12 to understand how they can help children in West Africa attend school through the Operation Classroom program. It is designed so parents or other adults can become involved in the book while helping children consider "involvement in mission."

The 20-page coloring book is in two sections.

The first section enables the child to visualize a little of the culture of West Africa and some problems related to the education of children there.

The second section shows how people—including children—can make a difference through the program of Operation Classroom.

Proceeds from coloring book sales—$1.25 each or $15 for a package of 15—help provide scholarships and equipment for 10 UM-related secondary schools in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Some 3,000 have been sold in the book's first year.

The Rev. Joe Wagner, pastor of Colfax (Ind.) United Methodist Church and co-ordinator of the program, told the Reporter that a Vacation Bible School kit is a companion to the coloring book.

The Vacation Bible School kit contains a teacher's guide; information on the history and culture of both countries; a list of United Methodist-related schools in those countries; a map of Liberia and Sierra Leone; a map of Africa; flags of the two countries and a drawing of the flag for children to color.

Carolyn Wagner, an Operation Classroom coordinator with her husband, wrote in Operation Classroom's Newsletter "The Blackboard," "We also urge you to consider involving the children in an Operation Classroom project, such as providing YES (Youth Educational Supplies) kits or making it possible for a West African child to attend school by providing a scholarship."

YES kits are cloth bags sewn from a simple pattern, then filled with school supplies—pencils, pens, a ruler, a notebook—collected by children and adults.

She said her office will give certificates to any Vacation Bible School group involved in an Operation Classroom project.

Operation Classroom has taken on a life of its own since it was established in 1984 (see accompanying stories).

When the Wagners were recruited as part-time co-ordinators, they initiated newsletters, international work teams to West Africa, teacher training programs in Africa, and several fund-raising projects, such as note cards, T-shirts and lapel pins.

Since then they have become commissioned as United Methodist missionaries assigned to the program by the General Board of Global Ministries.

Mr. Wagner said a top priority during June will be to ship 10 tons of school books and supplies to West Africa. Collected from United Methodists across the country, the shipment will be shepherded by Herbert Zigbou, principal of the Ganta (Liberia) United Methodist School, on his way to the Ivory Coast.

Mr. Zigbou and his wife, Mary Zigbou, have been living in the U.S. temporarily, having escaped death during the civil war in Liberia.

Illustration from Page 14 of the coloring book, "For God's Children." Drawing by the Rev. John Dicken, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Operation Classroom has origins with Indiana bishop, two lay leaders

Reporter Staff Special

Operation Classroom began in 1984 as a mission project of Indiana United Methodists.

Conference lay leaders John Shettle and Bob Bowman and Bishop Leroy Hodapp gave it impetus by developing a proposal to address secondary and vocational education needs in Africa.

Two countries, Liberia and Sierra Leone, were chosen because they are English-speaking and have a rich Evangelical United Brethren/Methodist heritage—Sierra Leone being historically associated with EUB mission efforts, Liberia with similar Methodist efforts.

Because United Methodism is the largest Christian denomination in each country, the church plays a significant role in educating the people.

After Indiana United Methodists met with teachers and headmasters of African schools, 10 schools were targeted—four in Liberia and six in Sierra Leone.

These schools needed textbooks, classroom supplies, laboratory instruments, furniture and building repairs.

The Rev. Joe Wagner and his wife, Carolyn, subsequently appointed to Colfax (Ind.) United Methodist Church, became part-time coordinators of Operation Classroom.

As word about the mission program spread among United Methodists in both North Indiana and South Indiana Annual Conferences, Sunday School classes, youth groups, and other organizations asked to become involved.

One popular project is assembling attractive book bags called YES Kits (Youth Educational Supplies) and ET Kits (Essentials for Teachers).

Other annual conferences have also indicated interest in Operation Classroom.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

For Minnesotans, help for Africans 'in the bag'

Reporter Staff Special

For Minnesota United Methodists, sending school supplies to children in Sierra Leone is almost "in the bag."

Make that 8,000 book bags.

That's the newest project of the Minnesota Annual Conference Operation Classroom committee.

"If each congregation takes one kit, sews the cloth and fills the bags, the conference will send book bags for more than 8,000 children to Sierra Leone," according to Mary Edlund, editor of the Minnesota conference edition of The United Methodist Reporter.

As starter raw material for the project, the conference received a donation of excess high quality cloth from Phil Mattison, chief executive of Core Products and a member of Forest Hills United Methodist Church.

Another congregation—Forest Lake—is producing a sample book bag kit for each of the conference's 322 churches.

The book bag kits will be distributed during the Minnesota Annual Conference in Mankato, June 11-14, along with enough cloth for each congregation to produce 25 additional bags.

A project as large as this is not new for Minnesota United Methodists. Since May 4, 1990, some 37,000 pounds of school supplies, textbooks, hymnals, shoes and medical supplies have been shipped to Sierra Leone.

The Rev. Kathy Horn, Minnesota Operation Classroom coordinator, said, "This opportunity seems God-given. Suddenly we can do much more abundantly than all we asked or thought."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Christian sharing may fight health care costs

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—The Christian concept of sharing may be applied to skyrocketing health insurance costs.

A group of Protestant church bodies, including United Methodists, has commissioned a study to determine the feasibility of sharing health care coverage.

"All churches, all denominations, all companies, all insurance carriers" are facing the problem of booming medical costs, said Arthur M. Ryan, head of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in a statement announcing the action.

Mr. Ryan and representatives of 13 other denominations belonging to the network have launched the $200,000 study, an investment they hope will mean substantial future savings.

A report of the study to be done by the consulting firm of Ernst & Young is due in December.

The churches hope the six-month study "will determine ways we can cooperate with a national network to gain greater control over our medical costs," Mr. Ryan said.

In the last decade, he said, church fiscal managers have watched the cost of health care rise proportionally higher than the cost of food and housing.

"Rising medical costs are now absorbing 12 percent of the national income. These escalating costs are heading us toward a national crisis. Insurance premiums are eating into the profits and wages of business and employees, and medical spending is taking an increasing share of the governmental budget," Mr. Ryan said.

Agricultural Faculty
Africa University

Two teaching positions available in December, 1991, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Doctoral degree preferred with field experience in African Agriculture and French or Portuguese competence desired.

Applicants outside U.S. send resume, four references and fax/telex number to: **Dr. John Kurewa, Africa Univ. P.O. Box 1320, Mutare, Zimbabwe.** Applicants residing in U.S. apply to **Dr. Paul Van Buren, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202. Fax (615) 340-7047, phone (615) 340-7371.**

Application postmark deadline is 8/15/91.

Disaster-relief trainees warned of discrimination

By JOHN W. COLEMAN JR.

CHARLESTON, S.C.—United Methodist ethnic local church community organizers were warned recently of such problems as burcaucratic redtape and neglect of poor communities.

The warning came while they were being trained to respond to natural disasters.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief led the training session in Charleston to increase the number of ethnic disaster response specialists.

Charleston was used as a case study because it was the site of major damage from Hurricane Hugo nearly two years ago and subsequent recovery.

"Following Hugo, there were complaints of language barriers, cultural insensitivity and indifference toward communities of color by those involved in rescue efforts," said Ruth Lawson, executive for the Community Developers program of the General Board of Global Ministries, which co-sponsored the event.

"We're trying to prevent those problems in the future."

The developers—many of whom have responded to floods, tornadoes and hurricanes in their own communities—learned the UMCOR system of response and strategies of working with the Red Cross, the U.S. military and government agencies.

"You have to be prepared to go in and take charge to make sure poor people get what they need from the resources that are available."

They also discussed ways of addressing special needs of youths, senior citizens and other disaster victims.

"Don't expect the government or even church response to be very timely or efficient," warned Sandra Swans, one of the first relief workers from Global Ministries' National Division to arrive in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, after Hurricane Hugo struck in 1989.

"You'll find bureaucratic paralysis, very little expertise and many inept decisions, like the government sending perishable pork and juice to survivors instead of rice, which is a staple of their diet.

"You have to be prepared to go in and take charge to make sure poor people get what they need from the resources that are available."

Mr. Coleman is an executive in the Division of Benevolence Interpretation with United Methodist Communications.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

HEADS PREACHING DUTIES: **Barbara Bate,** an active United Methodist laywoman and a faculty member at United Methodist-related Drew University in Madison, N.J., has been named director of preaching ministries for the denomination's General Board of Discipleship, effective in July. Ms. Bate, an associate professor of homiletics at Drew, will have primary responsibility for the board's Academy of Preaching and will be responsible for training and resources in preaching. She succeeds the Rev. **Michael Williams,** who joined the staff of Belle Meade United Methodist Church in Nashville.

EDITOR NAMED: **Thomas J. Tozer,** a full-time writer from Great Bend, Kan., has been named editor of "The United Methodist Newscope," the denomination's national weekly newsletter, effective June 10. Mr. Tozer recently wrote "Raising Responsible Teen-agers," and The United Methodist Publishing House will publish his "Pastoral Letters" under its Abingdon Press imprint in 1992. He succeeds **Bette Prestwood,** recently commissioned by the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries for mission service as a teacher of English in Taipei, Taiwan.

GRANTS AWARDED: United Methodism's Minnesota and Iowa Annual Conferences have been awarded grants of $14,000 each by the church's central communications agency to employ full-time staff communicators. The one-time 1991 incentive grants are part of a program begun a year ago by United Methodist Communications. Named to the Minnesota position, which includes editing that conference's edition of The United Methodist Reporter, was **Mary Edlund.** The Iowa position remains to be filled. Receiving first grants ranging from $9,000 to $14,000 were the denomination's Baltimore and Kansas East Annual Conferences.

FIELD STAFF CHANGES: United Methodist Communications has announced several changes in its field staff. **Deanna K. Armstrong** will be transferred from the Western Jurisdiction to the South Central, with office moved from Dallas to Kansas City, Mo. **Roderick K. Hargo** will be transferred from South Central to North Central with an office in Dayton, Ohio. North Central field staff member **Cannon Kinnard** retired May 31. A new staff member is being sought for the Western Jurisdiction. Continuing in present assignments are the Rev. **M. Ervin Daitey,** Southeastern Jurisdiction, and **Paula C. Watson,** Northeastern Jurisdiction.

SOCIAL ARM SEEKS DIRECTOR: A director of administration is being sought by the social action arm of the United Methodist Church. Deadline for applications to the General Board of Church and Society is June 28. The director works on an administrative team in planning, developing program strategies and evaluating the board's work areas. The position became open after the May t resignation of **Claudia T. Williamson.**

Seniors and parents: Read all about it . . .

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Everything a graduating high school senior ever wanted to know about college can be found in "Orientation '91."

Well ... maybe not everything. But the 48-page, award-winning, United Methodist-produced annual magazine does speak to some important issues facing students and parents at the start of a new school year.

Editor Terri J. Hiers said "Orientation '91" is intended to help students with the transition from high school to college and with the adjustment to campus life.

Now in its 13th year, the magazine is produced jointly by the campus ministry and interpretation units of the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

This year's cover story by Jay Townsend, a staff member of Greenpeace USA, is titled "Clean Up Your Act!" and deals with the environment.

Mr. Townsend outlines tips for "raising your eco-awareness" for college students.

"Remember, the concept of a disposable lifestyle has only been with us for about 30 years," the article concludes. "But now that the world is getting smaller and smaller, we've run out of places to hide our mess."

Other environmentally related articles deal with the wide impact of eco-awareness, recycling, political activism and the stewardship of the earth.

Practical tips about how to survive that important first year at college, loan and scholarship information, and study and parents' guides are regular features.

Other subjects treated in the current edition, released in May, include:

- How to choose a major;
- How to be safe and secure on campus;
- How to deal with suicide;
- How to deal with divorce;
- How the Bible treats stewardship of the earth;
- How prayer can enrich one's life;
- How Spike Lee makes a movie.

According to Ms. Hiers, local church pastors, campus ministers, chaplains, deans of students, directors of freshman orientation and other administrators consistently make use of "Orientation."

Individuals often purchase copies to give to friends and relatives who are entering college, she added.

Single copies are available at $3. Discounts are available for multiple-copy orders. Postage and handling charges also apply.

For details write "Orientation," Campus Ministry Section, United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0871, or call (615) 340-7400.

Can basic health-care be learned in U.S.?

UMC's Global Ministries board schedules project led by Indian husband/wife team

United Methodist News Service

In a small section of India, Dr. Mabelle Arole has trained more than 200 village women to teach basic health-care skills in their communities.

Beginning in September, she will work with the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries' health and welfare ministries unit to see if similar comprehensive community-based health care programs can be established in the United States.

Dr. Arole and her husband, Raj, both of whom have degrees in public health from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, realized more than 20 years ago that traditional medicine failed to meet the needs of people in India.

Cathie Lyons, chief executive of health and welfare ministries, spoke about the Aroles' work during the department's spring meeting.

"The Aroles knew that in addition to treatment—and even more important than acquiring new medical technology—work had to be done to enable village people to change the unhealthy living conditions and abject povcrty under which they lived," Ms. Lyons explained.

Started in 1970

They started the comprehensive rural health project in 1970 in Jamkhed, a province 250 miles east of Bombay.

"We shared our knowledge with illiterate village women," Dr. Arole told department directors.

"Average" women are selected and trained, then sent back to their own villages as health-care workers to deal with simple ailments and to educate others on everything from eye care to family planning.

The workers also form "clubs" of 40-50 women who assume responsibility for village health.

Ongoing weekly training is provided. Some women have been participating since the early '70s.

"We have to change their attitude, give them belief that they can do it and then give them the opportunity," Dr. Arole added.

Most of the capital costs came from church donations in the United States and Europe, she said, but the villages generate funding to operate the program.

Mothers are knowledgable

Today, mothers in the villages are knowledgeable about immunization and nutrition. On the average, infant mortality rates have dropped from 176 per 1,000 live births to 25 per 1,000 births, according to Dr. Arole.

Women are planting trees and dealing with environmental and energy issues. Recently a Chicago pathologist has taught them to do Pap smears and helped older boys in the village learn to interpret the smears.

During the next two years, Health and Welfare Ministries directors will visit the Jamkhed project and Dr. Arole will spend time evaluating possible projects in the United States.

The Aroles call on the church to take leadership in community-based health care projects. They have written that "primary health care is the greatest challenge to Christian ideals and values."

Dr. Mabelle Arole
. . . from India to U.S.

Booklet explains study panel's work

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Have a question about the background of the churchwide United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality?

By now, a leader in your annual conference probably has a resource that can help.

Information on the selection, makeup and process of the study committee has been compiled into a booklet by C. David Lundquist, chief executive of the church's General Council on Ministries.

That council is the agency to which the study committee will send its report for transmittal to the church's top policymaking 1992 General Conference.

Mr. Lundquist prepared the booklet at the suggestion of Bishop Felton E. May, council president, from a report on the study committee's background given at the council's April meeting.

The booklet was sent recently to all United Methodist bishops, to all directors of the General Council on Ministries and to directors of annual conference councils on ministries.

The booklet contains several of the questions that have been most frequently asked about the homosexuality study committee over the past few months.

The booklet's genesis dates to a meeting of the GCOM executive committee earlier this year at which it was alleged that the makeup of the study panel was "stacked" in favor of deleting The United Methodist Church's stance against homosexual practice.

The booklet does not include excerpts from the study committee's findings.

Drug/violence drive enters second phase

From news and staff reports

WASHINGTON—The second phase in a joint anti-drug/violence campaign between the Methodist bishops and one of the church's 13 seminaries is scheduled for next fall.

Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington will be the site of "Redeeming the City II—God's Sacred Place: The Church and Community Organizing," Sept. 25-28.

The seminary was challenged last year by Bishop Felton E. May (Harrisburg Area) to provide leadership training in the denomination's efforts to reduce drug abuse and violence in the United States. Bishop May is the leader of the Council of Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence.

The session next September will focus on how the church can help organize communities for healing the illnesses which, Bishop May told last year's symposium, spring from drugs and violence.

Native Americans told: Don't deny heritage

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Native Americans must stand up and declare that they can be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ without sacrificing their "Indianness," United Methodists were told at a recent school of evangelism in Nashville.

"We have been taught to deny our heritage in order to be saved, to be Christians," said the Rev. George Tinker, a member of the Osage nation who is on the faculty of United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

"Jesus did not ask hearers to stop being Jewish, to despise their heritage, to confess the sin of being Jewish," he declared.

A Lutheran, Dr. Tinker gave the opening address at the four-day event sponsored by the evangelism unit of the churchwide United Methodist Board of Discipleship.

The t10 participants in the Nashville school, mostly Native American, represented at least 17 states and about 15 Native American nations.

George Tinker

The New Testament theologian's opening address set the tone for the meeting, which included storytelling, music, and worship reflecting the wide spectrum of nations represented.

Several speakers testified to what Jesus has meant to Native Americans but said the institutional church has not always been understanding or supportive.

The event provided a variety of motivational sessions, workshops, and time for clergy and laypersons to share what works in their efforts to share the gospel with Native American people.

The United Methodist Church, second largest Protestant denomination in the United States, has about 15,000 identified Native American members in about t23 congregations.

The denomination also has about 75 ministries with Native Americans in addition to those based in local congregations.

"The proclamation of Jesus Christ has not left Indian people better off than they were 200 or 300 years ago," Dr. Tinker said.

"It is not Jesus who has caused our pain, but the proclamation."

Evangelism must affirm Jesus but "interpret him in ways that bring healing to the brokenness of churches and communities," he said.

Of mixed white-Native American heritage, Dr. Tinker said the Christian church had little trouble when his German ancestors brought a Christmas tree into Christian tradition.

"It was a pagan symbol, but they modified it, re-interpreted it and blessed it."

Why then, he asked, has the Christian church had difficulty accepting the use of drums, pipes, eagle feathers, sage smudging and other customs or traditions related to Native Americans?

"Maybe we can be faithful without giving up very much of our Indianness," he suggested.

"All cultures stand under God's judgment."

American Indians list effective evangelism needs

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—Effective evangelizing of American Indians today needs to be done with sensitivity for Indians as human beings of worth because they were created by God.

More than t00 people, mostly Native Americans, heard that message at a recent evangelism workshop for United Methodists in Nashville.

Several participants told of success in reaching new people by serving specific needs of Native Americans and providing a warm, friendly, fun place to gather.

"God made us Indian," was an affirmation heard often from resource leaders and participants.

Others at the meeting highlighted cultural information which could impact the effectiveness of evangelism efforts.

The Rev. Joe Bad Moccasin, an Episcopalian priest and a Sioux from Nebraska, said the Bible ... doesn't speak against culture. Jesus did not give up his culture."

Native American United Methodists differ greatly about how or whether Native American practices or concepts should be brought into Christian faith and life. Participation of Christians in powwows, for instance, is a source of disagreement.

The Rev. Homer Noley, a Choctaw from Independence, Kan., ordained in the United Methodist Church 30 years ago, said that Native American United Methodists generally agree on some traditions that have served them well in the church, including respect for elders, a strong sense of community and care for one another.

POSITION OPEN

The United Methodist Reporter has an immediate opening for a marketing executive with proven promotional skills, an ability to relate to United Methodists of every bent, a thorough knowledge of the church and an appreciation of how the Reporter can support and enhance the church's ministry.

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DIRECTOR OF MUSIC — Full-time position directing comprehensive program in 2,000-member church. Position available Sept. 1. Central UMC, 27 Church Street, Asheville, NC 28801.

SEEKING FULL-TIME MINISTER of Youth/Children, Hollywood Hills United Methodist Church, an active, growing congregation. $25,000 plus benefits, beginning August 1, 1991. (305) 989-8304, 400 North 35th Avenue, Hollywood, FL 33021.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Growing, dynamic, downtown church of 2600 seeks a full-time Minister of Music. Graded choirs, K-adult; handbells; tours abroad; TV ministry. Seminary preferred. Diaconal Minister preferred. Send resume with references to: Dr. John Horton, P.O. Box 334, Albany, GA 31702.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES in a 2200-membership church. Responsibilities include a state and nationally accredited day school through kindergarten, as well as Christian education for children's Sunday School program, nursery thru fifth grade. Master's degree in either early childhood education or child development, as well as in Christian education desired. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Send resume and current salary package to: Search Committee, Westbury United Methodist Church, 5200 Willowbend, Houston, TX 77096.

HOME BUILDING COORDINATOR: Responsible for operation and development of loan/grant programs for low income housing production and rehabilitation for regional non-profit organization. Requirements include knowledge of low-income housing development and finance, management and supervisory skills, experience in non-profit operations and budgeting, familiar with state housing programs and FmHA, and grant writing. Willingness to travel in four state region. Salary plus benefits. Send resume to Appalachia Service Project, Inc., 117 W. Watauga Ave., Johnson City, TN 37604, c/o Exec. Director. Deadline 7/15/91.

COORDINATOR OF NEW STUDENT Recruitment. Guide activities to identify and cultivate new students. Organizational, interpersonal and phone skills required. Reply with resume by June 15 to: Rose Hausman, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2121 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60201, or call (708) 866-3939. EOE

DIRECTOR, MUSIC MINISTRY — growing, 1100-member church, suburban Dallas. Begin August 1. Children, youth and adult choirs. $25,000 plus benefits. Send resume by June 15 to: First UMC, 601 S. Greenville, Allen, TX 75002.

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YOUTH-YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES. Exciting, growing 2000-member church. Disney World is our parish. Send resume: St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 4851 S. Apopka-Vineland Rd., Orlando, FL 32819.

OCEAN PARK (WASHINGTON) UNITED Methodist Camp 50th Anniversary Reunion. All former campers and friends invited home July 26-28. Reserve space now. (206) 665-4367.

WANTED: 1600-MEMBER CHURCH seeks full-time Director of Program and Youth Ministries. Experience desired. Send resume and salary requirements to: Fountain City UMC, 212 Hotel Ave., Knoxville, TN 37918.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION — First United Methodist Church. Send resume to: Search Committee, 411 Turner St., Clearwater, FL 34616.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND ADULT Ministries for 1400-member church. Position open June 1. Degree in Christian education and/or 5 years experience in Christian education. Job description available. Search Committee, Court Street UMC, 215 N. Court St., Rockford, IL 61103.

HYLA DOC: SURGEON IN CHINA Through War and Revolution. The story of Dr. Hyla Watters, Methodist missionary in China 1924-1949. Faith, adventure, international understanding. 300 pages, $14.95 post paid from: Elizabeth Allen, 520 Old Post Rd., Tolland, CT 06084.

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ACCREDITED DEGREE/HOME STUDY. Christian Bible College, Station Square, Suite 227, Rocky Mt., NC 27804. Catalog $1 (919) 442-1211.

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MUSIC AND YOUTH DIRECTOR, First United Methodist Church, Savannah, Tennessee. Full-time. Send resume to: Rev. E. Thomas Vann, 906 Main Street, Savannah, 38372.

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VISITING NEW ORLEANS? WORSHIP AT First Methodist, 3401 Canal Street. Dr. Ken Jones, pastor. Classes: 9:30 a.m. Worship: 11:00 a.m. (504) 488-0856.

Pediatric nurse returns from Liberia

New Yorker's message of hope: 'It takes so little to save the children'

By GUSTAV SPOHN
Religious News Service

NEW YORK—When Susan Leckrone left Liberia after three months of helping bring malnourished children back to health, it wasn't easy.

Though she had seen substantial progress during her time as a member of a Church World Service medical missionary team, there was much left to do.

Ms. Leckrone, a pediatric nurse at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, left for Liberia Jan. 5 and returned April 11.

She was part of a team that included several other nurses and doctors sent by Church World Service, the relief and development wing of the National Council of Churches, to assist in rebuilding war-ravaged Liberia.

Ms. Leckrone, an Episcopalian, was based in Monrovia, the country's capital city. She helped set up a feeding center for children in the basement of Cooper Clinic, which was a hospital operated by the Seventh-day Adventists before the civil war.

By the time she returned to the United States, the feeding center, established in cooperation with UNICEF, was treating about 50 malnourished children at a time, and Liberians were operating the center skillfully.

Many children, said Ms. Leckrone, were brought back to health from the brink of death while she was there, and that was a joy to see.

The country's sanitary sewage system was still in a shambles, Ms. Leckrone said. And electricity was largely unavailable in the capital.

The state of the economy and the shortage of food were underscored by the pay Liberian workers were being given when Ms. Leckrone left the country: two cups of rice a day.

The children Ms. Leckrone treated in the basement feeding station would have been put in intensive care in the United States, she said.

Although malnutrition is generally defined as being at 80 percent of normal body weight, many Liberian children were down to 60 percent, she said. Lack of space forced the feeding clinic to accept only children at the 70 percent level.

She recalled one father's coming to the clinic hoping to get help for his young son and daughter.

For the son it was too late. He was already dead. But within three weeks the daughter was "unrecognizable—running around, playing," Ms. Leckrone said.

"To me it was just so wonderful to participate in that, to see such dramatic change," she said. "It takes so little to do that, to save the children."

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JENNIFER GODDARD

'Little Huggers' meet with 'Papa Russ'

"Papa Russ" Bruner tells a story to his "Little Huggers" Sunday school class at First United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La., during a segment of "Let the Children Come," a United Methodist Communication video. The video is aimed at congregations which want to grow and serve children more effectively.

Review

'Sunday Dinner' sparks media controversy

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Norman Lear tells reviewer Mary Ann Brussat that his new sit-com "Sunday Dinner" addresses a spiritual hunger that leads most people to a deity. The Rev. Donald Wildmon, on the other hand, says the series promotes "secular humanism" (see related articles). The cast of characters represents a wide variety of religious beliefs.

By MARY ANN BRUSSAT
Religious News Service

The depiction of spirituality in Norman Lear's new comedy series "Sunday Dinner" has sparked a media controversy in religious America.

The series, which is being given a six-week tryout by CBS, debuted June 2 in the enviable primetime slot between "60 Minutes" and rebroadcasts of "All in the Family," Mr. Lear's hugely successful comedy series from the 1970s.

Mention Mr. Lear and spirituality in the same breath and camps form.

At one extreme are the Rev. Donald Wildmon and the American Family Association, a right-wing religious lobby.

CBS condemned

Mr. Wildmon condemned CBS for giving Mr. Lear a chance to promote "secular humanism."

On the other side in the debate are admirers of both Mr. Lear and his previous television work who are confident that, given the producer's track record with "All in the Family," "Sanford and Son," "Maude" and "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," he must know what he's doing.

If he puts prayer in prime time, that's a breakthrough, and religious people everywhere should get behind him.

Among those admirers is James Wall, editor of the "Christian Century," a liberal weekly magazine.

> *"... Belief in a higher power is not just for the elderly or the naive."*
> —James Wall

In a recent editorial he said, "Mr. Lear is gambling that the audience will accept his premise that a belief in a higher power is not just for the elderly or the naive."

This reviewer believes "Sunday Dinner" is both more reverent and less groundbreaking than the controversy would have viewers believe.

Does it mean trouble?

There seems to be a pervasive assumption that any serious treatment of religion and spirituality means trouble.

Do television's writers, producers and broadcast standards executives really think that all religious people are as touchy and defensive as Donald Wildmon? Do they assume that taking one faith seriously will offend all the others?

Mr. Lear knows better. In "Sunday Dinner," he is not afraid to depict people faithful to a variety of belief systems prevalent in contemporary America.

The stories revolve around the weekly get-togethers of the Benedict family. The situation sparking most of the comedy is the recent engagement of Ben (Robert Loggia), a 56-year-old businessman and widower, to TT (Teri Hatcher), a 30-year-old environmental lawyer.

Mainline protestants missing

The series tries to reflect religious pluralism, but one major perspective is missing.

No character represents the mainline church-going and synagogue-attending religious person in America.

Conservative Christian views, as expressed by Ben's sister, Martha, will not seem representative to many mainline Protestants and Catholics who tend soup kitchens, support international relief missions, participate in peace demonstrations and attend film and book forums.

Religion as the actions of a community of believers is missing in "Sunday Dinner."

It is the personal understanding of spirituality, however, that most appeals to Mr. Lear. He also knows that religion and spirituality are not isolated from daily life.

Sit-com's TT draws her theology from priest's 'Dream of the Earth'

By MARY ANN BRUSSAT
Religious News Service

TT Fagori, the pivotal character in producer Norman Lear's new comedy series "Sunday Dinner," is a woman with a decided "spiritual bent."

But she's certainly not a televangelist waving the Bible and calling for repentance. Nor is she a quiet church-going doer of good works like Edith Bunker from Mr. Lear's most popular series, "All in the Family."

She exemplifies for Mr. Lear, who determines how the character is written, the capacity to experience awe and wonder that can lead all people on some kind of spiritual search.

"What we don't talk about often enough—and I think we must do so—is our common capacity for experiencing awe, wonder, mystery, gratitude—all the things that lead most people to some deity, to some higher meaning or at least on some kind of search," he said.

Asked how TT came to her beliefs, Mr. Lear suggested that she was raised in a Christian home and became fascinated with other religious traditions as well. She learned about Hinduism, Islam, Eastern religions, Judaism and the New Age.

She may not be a mystic but, said Mr. Lear, "she comes from the certain knowledge, as I do, that a living faith is the best design for living."

Over the years, TT has had many spiritual teachers, says Mr. Lear.

"She obviously knows everything Jesus said and would, with every instinct, try to live it. I think she's read the "Tao Te Ching" by the Chinese philosopher Lao-tze. And she's probably had a friend who became a Buddhist monk."

Mr. Lear reveals that his character is familiar with the work of Joseph Campbell, the mythologist, and Matthew Fox, the Dominican priest who writes about creation spirituality.

TT's primary teacher, however, is Thomas Berry, the Passionist priest, historian of cultures, and author of "The Dream of the Earth."

When TT talks about "the natural world as the larger sacred community to which we all belong," she's quoting Mr. Berry.

Her deep sense of gratitude, her capacity to entertain wonder and mystery and her delight in the miracles of everyday life are all evident in Mr. Berry's writing.

In fact, Mr. Lear felt Mr. Berry's influence so strongly on the character that he bought the rights to "The Dream of the Earth" so that TT could express anything she wanted from the book.

Dear Deborah

Controversy continues over flags and ribbons

Dear Deborah:

In regards to one of your recent columns, I am compelled to differ with your comment that "In the United Methodist Church there is room for a full spectrum of opinions ... about ... (yellow ribbons and flags) symbols, which can be found in our church buildings."

Certainly there should be no room in any Christian church for people or views who support any war or other killing of humans, against which Jesus consistently spoke.

We should love our soldiers and encourage them to sin no more and hope they keep alive, but never condone their killing in war.

Jesus also spoke against serving or bowing down to symbols.

Sincerely,
George

Dear George:

As you have probably noticed, many people have written expressing strong opinions on both sides since that column appeared.

I certainly would not discourage anyone who decides to be a conscientious objector and refuses to take up weapons in war.

However, I cannot consign to sin all those who have gone to war in the belief that they wre protecting their homes and country.

This world is not yet the Kingdom of God, and sometimes Christians who are more mature in the faith have to gently bring along the younger/newer members until they develop courage as well as understanding.

Regardless of what we each think, we can all pray that the world will

Come to think of it, that applies to families and churches, too!

Cone to think of it, that applies to families and churches, too!

Readers are invited to write to Deborah. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Distinguished black pastor composed 'Stand by me'

When the storms of life are raging,
Stand by me;
When the storms of life are raging,
Stand by me;
When the world is tossing me
Like a ship upon the sea,
Thou who rulest wind and water,
Stand by me.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Charles Albert Tindley, distinguished Philadelphia Methodist minister, wrote these words and their familiar music in 1905.

The initial stanza recalls the experience that Jesus had with his disciples in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, when a storm arose and Jesus stilled the tempest.

Tindley personalizes the incident by praying that the Lord will stand by him when stormy times occur in his life.

Subsequent stanzas make similar pleas when he confronts tribulation, faults and failure, persecution and growing old.

Born of slave parents, Tindley was only 4 when his mother died. He was separated from his father the following year.

Through his own discipline, he learned to read and write; he later took a correspondence course from the Boston University School of Theology.

Ordained to the Methodist ministry, he served churches in Delaware and New Jersey. In 1902 he became pastor of the Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, the church where he had once worked as a janitor.

So successful was his ministry that new buildings were built in 1907 and again in 1924.

In spite of his protests, the church was renamed the Tindley Temple Methodist Church.

He preached to great throngs of people. Both blacks and whites were represented in the leadership of the church, along with Italians, Jews, Germans, Norwegians, Mexicans and Danes.

He wrote both words and music for many gospel songs. Among the most popular are "Nothing Between," "Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave It There," "We'll Understand It Better By and By" and "Stand by Me."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Come Down, O Love Divine"

The Witness

How very special, sister,
You are to us,
How lovely
And with what grace,
You minister love
To all and thus,
The Lord shines forth
From your face.
What privilege to know
A one so sweet,
One whose heart,
So very kind.
Blesses all
She chances to meet.
You're a treasure
We're honored to find.

—Clarence Wilson-Stewart

Summer interns

The Linda H. McCord Summer Interns who will serve as ambassadors for United Methodism's Black College Fund for 1991 are (left to right): Angela Knox, Paine College, Augusta, Ga.; Kevin Smalls, Claflin College, Orangeburg, S.C.; Patrice Holt, Bennett College, Greensboro, N.C.; Sidnitra Bates, Clark Atlanta University; Sedrick Harris, Rust College, Holly Springs, Miss.; and Maria Church, Dillard University, New Orleans. They will serve for 10 weeks, speaking to annual conference sessions, local congregations and other groups.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JOHN COLEMAN

THE METHODIST HOME OF NEW ORLEANS

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Fund Developer/Chaplain Retires

Rev. Lynch set three goals when appointed superintendent of The Methodist Home. (1) Leadership of the home should be under those with professional social degrees or training. (2) Services offered by the home must be increased to provide multiple services for children and families, and (3) an endowment fund should be established to ensure stable funding.

"I am pleased to see these goals being implemented." Rev. Lynch said, "The Methodist Home is a vital mission agency of the conference. Over 70% of child and family needs happen within 70 miles of us."

Rev. Lynch was honored with a retirement reception. Friends from several states sent letters and attended. He was presented with a plaque, a book of memories, and a watch.

Following careers as naval officer, principal, and university administrator, Rev. Lynch finished Candler School of Theology, and served the following churches: Shongaloo-White Hall, Cotton Valley-Pleasant Valley, Minden-Lakeview, Ruston-Grace, Lafayette-First, Noel, Aurora.

He organized the Sarepta U.M.C.; served as secretary of the Louisiana Annual Conference; and was secretary/treasurer of Board of Ministry.

Andy Wien (center) is shown presenting a plaque to Rev. Lynch and his wife Jeanne from the Board of Directors.

Dr. J. Roddy Taylor, Chair of the Board of Directors, presents a watch to Rev. and Mrs. Lynch.

Dr. Richard Hodges, Executive Director, is shown congratulating Rev. Lynch on his retirement.

Pennies Circle Church

St. Luke-Simpson UMC of Lake Charles, provided an innovative and exciting Lenten program for the children. The goal was to circle the church with pennies. They collected enough pennies to circle the church 3.9 times.

On various Sundays, they brought pennies to match the number of windows in their house; the number of children in their class, but the most fun was bringing pennies for the number of shoes their mother had in the closet.

St. Luke-Simpson UMC children pose with jars of pennies.

Fund Developer/ Chaplain Appointed

Rev. Kathy Clark-Dickens has been appointed to The Methodist Home. Rev. Clark-Dickens has served as Campus Minister at The University of Mississippi, Associate Pastor at Noel, Shreveport, and recently as Pastor Counselor with The Samaritan Counseling Center, Shreveport, while serving as Pastor of Belcher UMC.

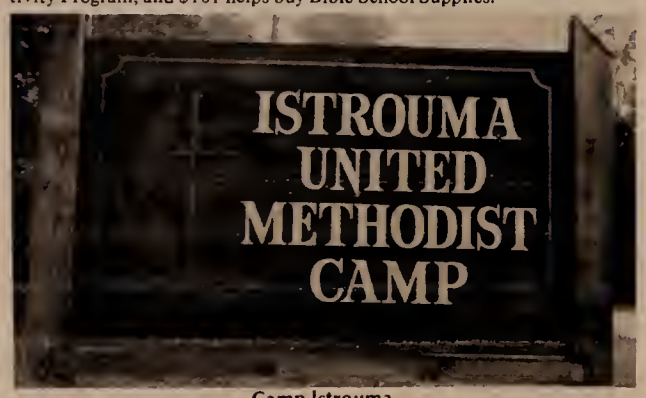
Kathy has studied extensively in counseling at Emory University and continues to work toward being a "Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors."

She has been recognized with The Distinguished Alumni Award by Centenary College School of Church Careers, and received the R. E. Smith Award from Centenary College. In 1980 she was listed as an Outstanding Young Woman of America.

Rev. Kathy Clark-Dickens

Summer Activities Begin

Summer Activities demands the maximum use of personnel, property, and finances. You can give individual help. $70 provides a week at Camp Istrouma; swimming suits, towels, walking shorts and money helps the Activity Program; and $101 helps buy Bible School Supplies.



Camp Istrouma

Bible School — A major summer activity

Summer fun in our pool

Stove and Chairs Donated

For over 50 years The Methodist Home Auxiliary has supported The Methodist Home. This year funds from their Fashion Show bought chairs for the Dining Room and a Stove. The Auxiliary donates over $4,000 each year.

Margaret Vest and Elaine Wells check out new stove.

Elaine Wells and Margaret Vest examine new chair.

Case Manager Added

Miss Adrianne Ben joins The Methodist Home as a case manager for the Therapeutic Foster Homes. When deemed appropriate, children are transferred from our hospital setting to the less restrictive homes. A case manager is on 24 hour call for ten homes under their care.

Adrianne was born in New Orleans and reared in Violet, La. She graduated from the Academy of The Holy Angels High School and earned her Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from Grambling State University.

She was a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and a member of the Grambling State Marching Band. While in college, she served as a child care worker at The Methodist Children's Home in Ruston.

Adrianne Ben, Case Manager-T.F.C.

Counselor-Therapist Hired

In order to meet state requirements for therapy for children in our care, Jeanette Ray has been added to our staff. Miss Ray shares her time with Touro Rehabilitation Center and Rader Institute of Eating Disorders.

After earning her professional counseling degree, she was a unit supervisor for a group home for pregnant teens, served as the senior rehabilitation counselor at the F. Edward Herbert Hospital, and worked in the Anxiety Disorders Clinic for the Louisiana State University Medical Center.

Miss Ray's major research was in "implications associated with closed head injuries." She has excellent interpersonal skills in both one-to-one and group counseling settings.

Jeanette Ray, Counselor-Therapist

Assistant Executive Director Welcomed

Danna G. Andrus is a graduate of McDonogh #35 High School. He earned his B.A. in social counseling from Our Lady of Holy Cross. In December 1991 he will complete his Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Mr. Andrus served 7 years in the United States Marines, three years in the Army National Guard, and 3 years in the Air National Guard. He worked at the La. Dept. of Corrections for 7 years before coming to The Methodist Home as a weekend supervisor in 1988. In 1989 he became a case manager in the Therapeutic Foster Care Program before becoming the director of that program. In November 1991 he assumed the current position of assistant executive director.

Danna G. Andrus

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The Joy of Christian Stewardship

This week's column has been written by Dr. Stone Caraway, Executive Director of Administration/Treasurer of the Louisiana Annual Conference.

I have served thirty years as a local pastor. I have also done ministry for five years as a District Superintendent. During those years, I frequently felt that I was engaged in an uphill battle against a widespread attitude that raising money was a necessary imposition in order to meet the church budget and pay the bills. In the eyes of many, this was regarded as a diversion from "real ministry," which included preaching, pastoral care and teaching.

In contrast to such thinking, however, Jesus was the greatest stewardship teacher of all. He said more about money than about any other subject, including prayer. In the Gospels, one verse in six focuses on material possessions, and these verses are punctuated by such memorable sayings as, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be, also" (Matthew 6:21) and "Everyone to whom much is given . . . will much be required" (Luke 12:48). In no less than fifteen parables, he taught what it means to be a responsible steward.

Perhaps there is no better summary of the good steward than the paradoxical statement: "Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it" (Mark 35). The steward in the process of investing his life in the causes of Christ discovers life at its deepest richest level.

Now, many Louisiana United Methodists have already claimed such a commitment and know the truth of these words. One of the most difficult tasks facing the church, however, is finding the answer to the question, "How do we encourage many of our church members to move from an unthinking acquiescence to society's values and discover for themselves the joy of Christian stewardship?"

One way is for the leadership of the church to have a vision and a plan big enough and bold enough to capture the hearts of people and bring together the needs of the church and the needs of individuals in such a way that the Gospel comes alive.

The great majority of our churches in Louisiana presented their Vision 2000 Covenants at the Conference Gathering on March 9, 1991 in Baton Rouge. They have now been returned for display, regular review and implementation.

I look forward to an exciting future for our great Conference. I am very appreciative of the opportunity granted me by Bishop Oden, his Cabinet and the Council on Finance and Administration to serve as your Executive Director of Administration and Conference Treasurer.

Stone W. Caraway

Response Needed for Areas Struck by Natural Disasters

The call to Louisiana United Methodists to respond to those effected by recent disasters has been made again.

In Costa Rica, a devasting earthquake struck on Monday, April 21, killing eighty people and causing widespread damage throughout the country. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has already responded with food for nearly 100,000 people, emergency shelter and clothing.

In Louisiana, several have gone on work camps to the affected areas with the Reverend Augie Aamodt. Much of what was done during those work camps was seriously affected by the quake.

If anyone wishes to contribute to UMCOR's relief efforts, they may do so through the local church by remitting to the Costa Rica Earthquake Emergency funds using UMCOR #507-402-7.

The news of the cyclone and tidal wave that killed over 120,000 people in Bangledesh is also a priority for UMCOR funds. Within twenty-four hours, UMCOR sent over $100,000 worth of aid to Bangladesh in the form of temporary shelter, water purification tablets, food, clothing and medical supplies. Norma Kerhborg, former UMCOR chief, was sent to the area to assess what else United Methodists can do.

If you wish to be of assistance, remit funding through the local church to the Bangladesh Emergency. The UMCOR number is 601-740-2. Church treasurers are advised to use this number to make sure that the funds are routed to the correct destination.

Older Adults Focus of Upcoming Event

On October 20-25 a United Methodist Week for Older Adults will be held at the Scarritt-Bennett Center. Designed for people over 60 years of age who are members of the United Methodist Church, it is a one week educational and recreational program designed to strengthen personal faith and to share practical strategies for enriching Older Adult Ministry in the local church and community.

Participants in the program will attend two morning classes: "Methodism and Personal Faith" taught by Dr. Frank Gulley, associate dean of Divinity School, Vanderbilt University and "Ministry and Spiritual Needs for Older Adults" taught by Dr. Richard Gentzler, director of Education Ministries with Older Adults, General Board of Discipleship.

Afternoon sessions will include a handbell class, storytelling class, creative drama class, opportunities to visit Nashville points of interest and general boards and agencies of the United Methodist Church.

Evening recreational activities will consist of group games and square dancing plus gospel and country music performances.

The cost for the courses, lodging, meals and extracurricular activities is $310. For commuters the cost is $230, including courses and meals.

Scarritt-Bennett Center, located on the former Scarritt College campus, is a center for the education of laity. Significant funding for programming is provided by the Scarritt Foundation.

For more information, contact: United Methodist Week, Scarritt-Bennett Center, 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2166, 615/340-7587.

At Centenary College

1991 School of Christian Mission Set

The 1991 School of Christian Mission is scheduled for July 18-21 and will take place on the campus of Centenary College in Shreveport. "Faithful Witnesses for God's Mission" is the theme for this year's event.

Ms. Gladys T. Prillerman is the Dean for this year's school. She leads an outstanding and dedicated teaching staff for those attending. "The Gospel of John" will be taught by the Reverend Fay Barr-Hartung and Mrs. Mary Lou Blakeman. "Living Values/Changing Times" will be taught by the Reverend Dr. George W. C. Calvin Sr., Mr. Joe and Mrs. Billye Elmore and Ms. Audrey Milo. Ms. Betty Ferrington, Mr. Douglas and Mrs. Helen Morrill and Ms. Jung-Soon Bergmann will present the study, "Japan."

The study of the "Gospel of John" will approach that Gospel of John from the third world experience of oppressed people encountering Jesus as he calls people to abundant life. The testimony of those whom he encountered in his life will be used to discern his voice today in a way that moves beyond dualism to unity.

"Living Values/Changing Times" enables citizens of North America to critically examine contemporary value systems in the light of biblical teachings; to develop strategies that affirm or work for change in personal attitudes and institutional patterns; and to find support for change within the community of faith.

Recognizing that Japan has been intricately linked with North America, the purpose of the study of "Japan" is to educate Christians in Canada and the United States about the realities of contemporary Japanese life and the variety of relationships between North America and Japan, so that Christian witness may be strengthened as God's people act together as faithful partners in response to the challenge facing our nations within the global community.

Through the Estelle Dameron School of Christian Mission Scholarship Fund, the Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women offer scholarships for the 1991 school. Applications should be sent to Dr. Marilyn Ray, 10341 Flossmoor Drive, New Orleans, LA 70127.

Registration, including insurance coverage fee, is $10 and should be made payable to the Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women. Housing and meal costs are to be paid upon arrival. Registration fee and form should be sent to Judy Rountree, P.O. Box 635, Jonesville, LA 71343, (318) 339-9892. Registration fee will be returned if cancelled before July 10.

Dreams Become Realities with Special Help from Louisiana United Methodists

Editorial Assistant's Note: The following is from an article written by Dr. J. Philip Woodland, former pastor of University William B. Reily United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge and now Monroe District Superintendent. Dr. Woodland wrote the article after attending the annual Louisiana Methodist World Hunger Scholarship (FISH) Board of Directors meeting. University Church is a supporter of the FISH program.

"Last Thursday I saw a miracle. It happened in the Castilian Room of the LSU Union, March 7, a little past noon. Twelve years ago Bill Patrick had an idea. The Methodists had been long on talk about concern for the problems of world hunger. The concern was heard in resolutions and reports, prayers and liturgies and sermons. Great conferences were held to discuss the problem. But beyond lengthy studies and massive emergency relief, the church seemed stymied at addressing its root causes. Bill, through his work with Wetlands around the world, visited the developing nations where hunger, malnutrition and famine are year-to-year realities He saw the possibility of bringing to LSU young, promising food scientists for advanced training. Last Thursday, eight of these students gathered for the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Methodist World Hunger Scholarship Program. Another thirty have returned and are serving as teachers, researchers and directors of government programs. These eight, currently studying at LSU, were gathered from India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Philippines, Ghana, Uganda and Ethiopia. They are studying at LSU through scholarships funded by United Methodists in Louisiana. In the twelve years of the program more than a million dollars have been contributed by Louisiana United Methodists.

As we share our vision of the Church in 2000, a part of it will be healthier children in Uganda and Ethiopia, in India and the Philippines, and a dozen other nations. That dream will become reality because of trained and dedicated teachers at LSU, many of whom are United Methodists, sharing their learning with younger scientists from developing nations. That vision will be realized because United Methodists care enough about hungry children to provide training for their nations' best and brightest students. That dream will come true as these well-trained scientists help local farmers produce more and better fish, rice, and sweet potatoes. It will be because one man had a vision and the commitment to see it through. That's when mission happens.

In many ways it was an ordinary United Methodist meeting . . . opening prayer, good food, minutes quickly approved, finance report routinely received. But for me it was a faith-renewing experience, a revival of hope for the Church, a freshened awareness of what God is doing through committed persons. One person can make a difference. Ideas do become reality. The Church is in mission in effective ways. By the year 2000 a few thousand people will be better fed, with a better chance to live a full and healthy life. It was a dream becoming real as Michael, Zeleke, Orlino and Hillarius thanked the hosts of unseen, unknown "Methodists" for this opportunity for training. I was present at mission happening. In my mind's eye, I could see 5000 × 5000 being fed with enough left over to feed as many more. I saw a miracle."

Any individual, group or church wishing to become a part of the miracle of L.M.W. Hunger Scholarship can receive additional information by contacting its Director, Dr. William H. Patrick Jr.; Center for Wetland Resources, Louisiana State University; Baton Rouge, LA 70803; (504) 652-6560.

Communication Workshop to be Held

A "Communications Skill Building for the 90s" workshop will be held on July 7-13 at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. Spanish-language workshops will also be conducted July 11-13.

Co-sponsored by United Methodist Communications (UMCom) and Scarritt-Bennett Center, the workshops will help participants learn basic "how-to" skills for use in their programs. Areas to be covered during the week-long event are: "Video Production"; Internal Communications"; including newsletters and bulletins; "Radio"; and "Strategy for Local Church Media Campaigns," including publicity, advertising, and public service announcements.

For more information write Maxine Clarke Beach, Scarritt-Bennett Center, 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2166 or Shirley Whipple Struchen, United Methodist Communications, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN, 37202-0320, or contact Sarah S. Kreutziger, Communications Director, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802; (504) 346-1646.

Program to Involve Expanding Hispanic Ministry

A Conversational Spanish Language Program for the Summer of 1991 will take place June 24 through July 5 at the Lydia Patterson Institute, Center for Cross-Cultural Educational Ministries in El Paso, Texas.

Consistent with the Church's increasing service to Hispanic populations both in the United States and in Latin America is the need for cultural and linguistic preparedness of clergy and lay people. Lydia Patterson Institute is pleased to announce a special two-week summer seminar which will provide those who are involved in expanding the Church's Hispanic ministry with the basic Spanish conversational and cultural knowledge necessary to work effectively within these communities.

The program will include 50 hours of classroom Spanish Language instruction. Class size is limited. The teaching method is audio-lingual. Students participating will spend the majority of their time speaking in and not about Spanish, thus giving them the opportunity to use Spanish in communication rather than in translation. The course content will equip students to function in practical and ministry-related situations and include relevant vocabulary.

A candid "nuts and bolts" training session will be held to help participants better understand the value system and ways of their Hispanic counterparts. The workshop will consist of a series of presentations of lecture topics dealing with Mexican and Hispanic American Culture, and open forums in which specific problems are confronted from several perspectives.

Participants will be lay and clergy leadership from churches of the South Central Jurisdiction and Western Jurisdiction including: Volunteers in Mission; leaders, domestic and international; pastors; community ministry professionals; and lay evangelists.

Lydia Patterson staff and local leadership will direct tours and excursion activities as well as transportation services. For further information contact the Institute at P.O. Box 11, El Paso, Texas 79940; (915) 533-8286.

Of Special Interest On the Inside Pages

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Bishop hopeful following Angola ceasefire ..... Page 4
Data measure ethnic portion of United Methodism ..... Page 4
Faith Connections ..... Page 4

Persons — Churches — Events

Bethany UMC in New Orleans recently employed a full-time Administrative Assistant. Mrs. Doris Williams, a member of the church, has the job of programming vital church statistics and other pertinent information into the church's new computer. In a few short weeks this new office has revolutionized the methods of conducting church business. A future development of this project is to install an additional computer terminal in the pastor's study. This project is one of several from the outgrowth of the VISION 2000 planning toward the revitalization of this local church.

Men's Day was celebrated recently at the church during the 11 a.m. worship service. The theme for the celebration was "Christ: The Solution to International Crisis." The message was delivered by Civil Rights worker, former U.S. Congressman, former United Nations Ambassador, and former mayor of Atlanta, the Reverend Andrew Young. Music was provided by the Bethany United Men Singers. The Reverend Kenneth M. Fisher is pastor of Bethany.

* * *

Carrollton UMC in New Orleans recently announced that the regular Sunday morning service will take place at 9:30 a.m. Church School will follow the service. This time change went into effect June 2, 1991. The Reverend Leland D. Wade is pastor.

* * *

Connie Kell, Secretary/Treasurer of the Ruston District, received a BS degree in accounting from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston in May. Her plans are to work for a CPA firm or for a corporation as an internal auditor after she moves to Shreveport this summer. She plans on taking the CPA exam in November. Connie has served the Ruston District for eight years. She is grateful to the people she has worked with over the years, especially District Superintendents Don Hall, Henry Blount, Doug McGuire and James Poole. She also gives thanks to the pastors who have all supported her educational goals through the years.

* * *

Mount Nebo UMC in Downsville held its annual Homecoming on Sunday, May 26 at 11 a.m. A dinner followed on the grounds. The Reverend Isaac Patton, former pastor and retired United Methodist minister, served as guest preacher for the event. A three-night revival series followed the homecoming with the Reverend James Poole, Ruston District Superintendent, preaching Sunday evening, and the Reverend Martin Corie bringing the message on Monday evening. Retired minister Homer Bailes preached on Tuesday evening. The Reverend Stephen Williamson is pastor of Mount Nebo.

* * *

In connection with their outreach ministry, **Justiss Memorial and Eden UMCs** recently raised over $700 to send to the Methodist Children's Homes in Ruston and New Orleans. Prior to this venture, Justiss engineered a drive to raise funds to provide Spanish Bibles for Mexico. This project netted over $460. Both churches are located in the community of Trout. Pastor of the two churches is the Reverend George K. Reech II.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Fizz, formulas and faith

Analogies are a double-edged sword. They can convey both vivid insights and misunderstanding.

Example: the pastor of a large and growing Southern Baptist congregation likened growing churches to different formulas of Coca-Cola.

Traditional churches are like Classic Coke, he said, "doing it the way we've always done it, and it's working."

But other churches are like New Coke, he said, and are able to reach people who don't like the traditional church format.

"If we're serious about winning America, we've got to have 12 brands of Coke" in church styles, the speaker said.

Well, sort of.

The speaker's underlying point is worth re-stating:

Dynamic, growing congregations—like marketers of successful products such as Coca-Cola—constantly find ways to relate to people's distinctive needs and changing circumstances.

Just as Jesus reached out to people in various ways—by a healing touch, a prophetic challenge, a probing parable, etc.—vital congregations witness effectively to God's love by offering "different strokes for different folks."

This is an especially timely reminder for local churches that have rocked along for years without taking a hard look at the evolving needs and circumstances of their members and neighboring community.

They need to ask: Does our congregation's menu of activities match the needs and lifestyles of those it seeks to serve?

Some churches are like Classic Coke and some churches are like New Coke. "If we're serious about winning America, we've got to have 12 brands of Coke" in church styles, the speaker said.

Well, sort of.

If the answer is "no," what can be done to re-shape our efforts to proclaim God's love in ways that will quench the spiritual thirst of more people?

While attempting to put more "fizz" in our endeavors, we should be wary of a danger in the Coca-Cola analogy.

Unlike soft drink producers, the church's goal is not simply to entice people to "buy its product." Our aim is to invite people to experience the joy of life in Christ—both individually and as members of the church.

Many forms of activity may succeed in attracting people to the church but not be consistent with Christian teachings.

We need to be as clear in our Christian identity as we are flexible in responding to changing circumstances. Otherwise we might easily find ourselves offering people a cheap substitute rather than "the real thing."

My Witness

I'm grateful for Christians who helped me grow up

By ROBERT R. TAYLOR

It had been over two years since I'd been home for more than an overnight stop. Things in my hometown seemed so different yet at the same time so very much the same.

I arose early to find a 65-degree East Texas morning, so I decided to take advantage of an opportunity that rarely affords itself in Illinois in February: the chance to jog while it was warm.

I tied on my running shoes and headed down Webb Street, the same route I used to walk to my elementary school. My mind became flooded with memories of walking to and from school with my friends, and stopping off at their homes after school. I had begun to work up a light sweat as I turned the corner that leads to the school.

Across the highway, down a block, and turning a corner, I passed my old school. My first day of school, the day my dog came bounding into my third grade classroom, hanging from my knees on the "monkey-bars"—all these thoughts took me back to a much younger carefree time.

Fields will stand forever

On my left was the former site of the Little League and Pony League baseball fields. I always dreamed of hitting a home run over those fences. I once had an in-the-park home run against the Pirates, but I never hit one out of the park.

The Pony League field is now a soccer field where youngsters play a game I have never quite understood. The Little League field is now enclosed by a fence as a part of someone's back yard. Newer, better fields have replaced them on the other side of town. But in my heart and mind those fields will stand forever.

Slowing down allowed me to reminisce even more. As I passed house after house, I could still remember those who lived in each one. Names on the mailboxes confirmed my memory. Former teachers, parents of classmates, more than one Sunday school teacher—each home housed a person that had played an important part in shaping the person that I have become.

The people made it special

I crossed the highway and went one block farther. Now I was back on Webb Street and headed for home. It kept occurring to me that things were so very different, yet in a way still so much the same.

Then I realized what made it so familiar: the people who were there. The ball park is gone forever.

People of faith who make up our churches help shape who we become.

New businesses had moved into town since I left home. Yet the one thing which made this place so special, that made it feel like home—the people—were all still here.

Something else quite wonderful occurred to me. The people who had made such an impact upon me by encouraging, guiding, and molding me as a youngster, were all people who were active in their church.

They were not all United Methodists, but without exception they were believing people, active in their respective churches.

I reached the driveway at Mother's house, stopped jogging, and walked to cool down. I walked up the front steps hot, sweaty, and out of breath.

My 1-year-old son ran up to me and threw up his arms to be held. Holding him, I felt a sense of relief. He too, will grow up surrounded by people of faith who will make up the churches I will serve throughout my life.

I pray that they will influence him as much as these people have influenced me.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Robert R. Taylor is minister of The United Methodist Church in Roodhouse, Ill. (Central Illinois Annual Conference).

Letters to the Editor

'Dead issue' petition scam wasting millions of our dollars

I read with interest the May 24 "Here I Stand" headlined, "Petition 2493: A false prophet."

The chain letters regarding Petition 2493 are probably the most insidious scam perpetuated by unsuspecting Christians in this century.

I had just finished reading a publication from a fraternal organization in our state in which the chain letter had been printed and persons asked to respond when I picked up The Reporter and read the above-mentioned article.

Obviously, some person or groups are circulating this "dead issue" and wasting millions of dollars in postage and materials. The last estimate I heard was that $4 million had been spent on these mailings. Imagine what the Christian churches of America might have done for the hungry of the world had this been responded to, not out of emotion, but with research and caring.

Thank you for a wonderful publication. I look forward to receiving it each week.

William R. Keeffe
Bow, New Hampshire

Handgun not violent

A hammer does not make a carpenter, nor does a pipe wrench make a plumber. A handgun does not make a person violent.

However, that is your premise in your May 17 editorial headlined, "Handgun laws: No panacea."

Violence is a human emotion aroused by many reasons. Violent people will use any tool available, even hammers, pipe wrenches, a sling shot, or the jawbone of an ass.

Your editorial says lawmakers struggle to regulate handgun sales. They need to channel their struggles to regulate violence. Most of their anti-gun efforts are only affecting the honest non-violent people anyway.

The United Methodist Church encounters many global cultures in the mission field. I believe our church needs global missionaries right here at home. The challenge is to regulate the violence ourselves and not leave it to lawmakers to bungle.

Gene R. Schreiber
Salt Lake City, Utah

Find alternate text

I enjoyed reading Associate Editor's Cynthia B. Astle's May 24 "Faithfully yours" column.

I am, too, a Civil War buff. My great-grandfather fought in that conflict and I served in the army during World War II.

For many years I sang in choirs, played in orchestras and enjoyed "Battle Hymn of the Republic" as a member of the congregation. It gave us goose bumps when we arrived at the final chorus of "Glory, Hallelujah!"

It has been only in recent years that our thinking has changed and "Battle Hymn" is no longer in our repertoire. Many churches have also concurred, but not unanimously. Of course, the image of a warlike God is incompatible with Christians who are trying to abolish war. A loving God who wields a "terrible, swift sword" no longer fits our concept of Christianity.

For those who would like to continue to use "Battle Hymn," may I suggest finding alternate words that might convey a different image of the church of today's peace-loving God.

Wallace Umber
Los Angeles, California

Control medical costs

There is a terrorist group in India's state of Bengal which, among other activities, threatens physicians with death unless they bring their fees down to a fixed minimum affordable by the poor. How terrible!

But what should Christians do about the uncontrolled, increasing medical costs? (See related articles elsewhere in this issue).

No one dares accost the self-justified greed of pharmaceutical companies, of hospital and nursing home establishments, and of "doctors."

We have a well-oiled disease care system in this country, but "healthcare" is left to the amateurs. We wait in vain for a medical Martin Luther to bring about a reformation in his profession.

Not that there are no Christian doctors. Many dedicated physicians participate in Christian mission. I have wondered why some will serve as medical missionaries on salaries equivalent to those of fellow-missionaries who are not physicians and yet, upon taking up practice back in the U.S., they fall in line with the rapacious practices of the American Medical Association.

Tom Scott
Nashville, Tennessee

It's pointless

Your newspaper continues to cultivate a controversy about whether to honor Christopher Columbus and celebrate the discovery of America on the 500th anniversary in 1992 (see UMR, May 10).

That controversy is pointless because the founders of this nation in 1775-1800 made Columbus (Columbia) a metaphor for the new nation. Every generation since then has amplified the vitality of the Columbus tradition and inspiration for the United States.

The organizers of the United States government created a Federal District which they named the "District of Columbia."

Music composers, such as Francis and Joseph Hopkinson praised him in melodies that are still heard (e.g. "Hail, Columbia, Gem of the Ocean"). Newspapers put his name in their mastheads (e.g. "Columbian Sentinel").

New York renamed its prestigious college (King's College) to Columbia College. Eventually sculptors and painters made Columbus a permanent part of the United States history as they decorated the Capitol building.

Invariably, our presidents cite Columbus as an inspiration to the American way of life—land of opportunity, personal liberty, and individual development and creativity.

Christopher Columbus is an irrevocable part of the United States history, tradition, and aspiration. Failure to honor Columbus and celebrate the discovery of America is a futile attempt to rewrite the history of the United States.

John C. Appel
Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

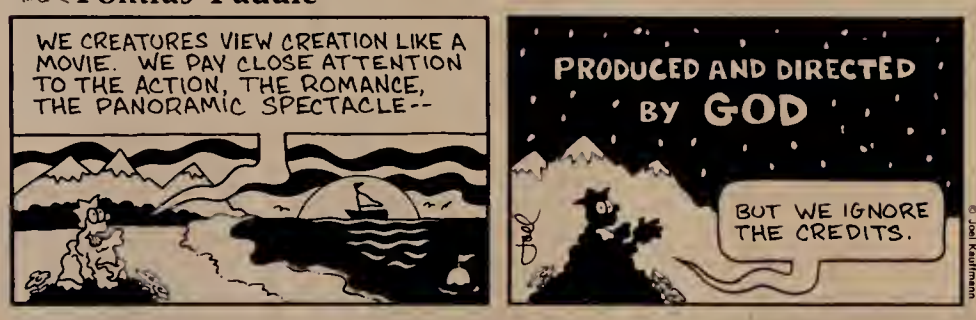
How about a crossword?

I love my church newspaper. When it comes to our house, this paper is read and reread more than our city paper.

One suggestion: How about a crossword puzzle with various biblical topics? (i.e., faith, spiritual gifts, etc.)

Stephanie Gist
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"If a person is going to be an effective sharer of faith, he needs a clear, honest and thought-out personal witness. Your own experience of God's faithfulness and grace is the basis of what you have to share—no more, no less."

—The Rev. David L. Brazelton, United Methodist General Board of Discipleship

* * *

"There are two ways to kill people: one is to rob them of life; the other is to rob life of its meaning. There are two ways to enslave us: one is to give us masters; the other is to take away our God. The second is the more cruel and terrible and much more frequent. We do not live by bread alone. We live by meaning."

—Eugene Winkler, quoted in "Presbyterian Outlook."

* * *

"Friends, this is the Good News in the risen Christ. While He still bears the marks of abuse, Jesus radiates a strength and glows with new possibilities which pulsate in all who trust Him. . . . Because the risen Christ alive in us still bears the wounds while releasing a healing, we will take courage to name our hurts and bear the wounds of those who are hurt in the world."

—United Methodist Bishop Roy I. Sano, Denver Area

* * *

"In a world that is so hurried that we do not have time for one another, we must remember that we as Christians were taught to love one another. How can we have vital congregations and faithful disciples when we forget to express love, to demonstrate love and to be loving persons?"

—The Rev. Thomas H. Cloyd, council on ministries director, Tennessee conference

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the father." (RSV).

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
	— :	—

(Last week's answer: 1 John 4:18)

Readings for week of June 17

Monday: Psalms 46
Tuesday: Psalms 47
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27
Thursday: Mark 4:1-25
Friday: Mark 4:26-34
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 5:1-5
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 5:6-17

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• Paper, Supplies	$
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• Secretary's Time	$$
• Pastor/Associate's Time	$$$
TOTAL	$$

As you are planning your 1991 budget, consider the hidden costs of producing your church newsletter. Expenses are usually spread out in different sections of your church budget so you don't actually see the total cost. When you add up these real costs you may discover that a weekly edition of the **United Methodist Reporter** or biweekly edition of the **United Methodist Review** can actually provide significant savings for your local church. Plus, a UMR edition frees up valuable staff and secretarial time which can be redirected to other parts of your mission and ministry. Give us a call and let us help you compare costs!

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Faith watch

ISRAEL STANDS ACCUSED: United Methodist Bishop **Thomas B. Stockton** has joined four other Virginia bishops in accusing Israel of mistreating Palestinians in the occupied territories. Episcopal Bishop **Charles Vache** of Southern Virginia was the first religious leader in that state to call on Congress to withhold aid to Israel until it agrees to give the Palestinians sovereignty. The Episcopal bishop was criticized by Jewish leaders for comparing Israel's treatment of the Palestinians with the Nazis' early treatment of Jews, and he later apologized for that remark. Bishop Stockton expressed his support for Bishop Vache's general approach via a letter published in the "Richmond Times-Dispatch."

NEW ROLE IN PERU: In his first statement as the new bishop of the Methodist Church of Peru, Bishop **Pablo Mamani**, 61, recently said that the church will play an important role in the process of peace in the civil war-ravaged nation. Bishop Mamani plans to begin a dialogue between armed rebel groups and the Peruvian government in a move to stop the violence. The bishop's election has been called an historic occasion in Peru, one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. In 100 years of Peruvian Methodism, he is the first bishop elected from the poor, indigenous segment of the population. The autonomous Peruvian Methodist Church is not organically related to United Methodism.

UNEMPLOYMENT DEPLORED: **Jaydee Hanson,** an assistant general secretary of United Methodism's General Board of Church and Society, is among leaders from at least 24 religious groups who signed a statement released June 7 deploring what was described as "the deepening unemployment crisis in the U.S." The statement was issued in support of efforts to review the nation's unemployment compensation system. The National Council of Churches in the U.S.A and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs coordinated the religious leaders' support.

Religion-news pact signed

NEW YORK—Religious News Service and the New York Times News Service announced an agreement last week under which the Times will market RNS materials to the public press. Announcing the agreement were RNS executive editor the Rev. Judy Weidman, a United Methodist clergywoman, and John Brewer (left) and Pat Vance of the Times. RNS, founded in 1934 by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is owned and operated by The United Methodist Reporter.

Compiled from news and staff reports

UM efforts emerge on health care crisis

Local congregations may soon have role to play in campaign for accessible health care

Health care crisis stories
By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

United Methodist local congregations may soon be offered major roles in campaigns to stop runaway medical costs and provide adequate health care for all citizens.

Denominational involvement has emerged in recent weeks via complementary internal and external efforts:

■ The continuing refinement of a denominationwide health care plan which church officials hope will slow down skyrocketing health insurance costs for ordained ministers and lay church employees;

■ A public policy campaign to obtain a universally accessible national health care system.

National-level efforts directly involve three United Methodist agencies: the General Board of Pensions, the Health and Welfare Department and the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society.

The pensions board was assigned by the church's policymaking 1988 General Conference to study the feasibility of a denominationwide health insurance plan for ordained ministers and lay church workers (see accompanying story below).

Health and Welfare, Women's Division and Church and Society are active in a broad-based group representing major U.S. faiths and public-interest organizations in a campaign to provide accessible, universal health care (see accompanying story below).

These national efforts are becoming more visible in many regional and local areas.

The pensions board-related Health Insurance Task Force recently held regional meetings to receive suggestions on the health insurance proposal, said Gerald Beam, chief of participant services for that board.

The pensions board will make its report and recommendations to the 1992 General Conference.

Meanwhile, the basic working principles of the public policy campaign will become better known to local congregations this summer, said Charles Cole, project officer for the Health and Welfare Department.

"Representatives of United Methodist Women expect to bring the working principles summary to some regional Schools of Christian Mission," he explained.

Dr. Cole said that as many as 15 national health proposals are under consideration in the U.S. Congress. He said he anticipates that by early 1992 these will be whittled down to three to four options.

He said that current plans are to have local units of United Methodist Women discuss the proposals. UMW units then may be asked to solicit participation of their local congregations in lobbying U.S. senators and representatives on behalf of one or more proposals.

Another political-action possibility, Dr. Cole said, is regional efforts that would include administrators of United Methodist-related hospitals and other health and welfare ministries.

Dr. Cole noted that a recent Harvard University study found that 89 percent of Americans feel a change must be made in the U.S. health care system.

Of the middle-income survey respondents, 68 percent said they favor a universal access system similar to that used by Canada, he added.

"Since The United Methodist Church is primarily a middle-income church, I found this to be a very telling statistic," he said.

"We've discovered that the issue of affordable, accessible health care is not just a low-income, ethnic-minority issue, but one that must concern all of us."

UMC integral to coalition lobby

An estimated 37 million Americans are without health care insurance.

And those who have it are having an increasingly harder time paying for it.

These facts have sparked creation of a coalition of public-interest organizations and faith groups, including representatives of The United Methodist Church.

The coalition, known as the Interreligious Campaign for Access to Universal Health Care, seeks to gain nationally sponsored, universal health care for all Americans.

Reports about the campaign will come this fall to the church's General Boards of Global Ministries and Church and Society.

A resolution endorsing the campaign will be considered by the church's policymaking 1992 General Conference.

Genesis in 1989

The campaign had its genesis in 1989 at a meeting on health care called by former President Jimmy Carter, said Charles Cole, a United Methodist layman and project officer with the Health and Welfare Department of the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

In the 18 months since that initial meeting at the Carter Center in Atlanta, said Dr. Cole, the group has developed three main objectives:

✓ Universal access to health care.

✓ Control of runaway medical costs.

✓ Quality care for everyone, not just those who can afford it.

Dr. Cole and Jane Hull Harvey, an executive with the church's General Board of Church and Society, were among United Methodists who participated in the coalition's most recent meeting in Williams Bay, Wisc.

"We have been doing a lot of 'Band-Aiding' over the cancer [of the health care crisis]," Ms. Harvey told the Reporter. "It's time for systemic change."

Ms. Harvey said the coalition's plan is to increase lobbying for accessible health care among members of the U.S. Congress.

To that end, she said, the coalition is working on a five-year plan for achieving national health care.

Faith groups active

U.S. faith groups, including The United Methodist Church, have been active in this area for nearly 10 years, she noted.

Both the 1980 and 1984 United Methodist General Conferences adopted resolutions regarding health care access. Those actions became part of the church's collection of policy statements known as the Book of Resolutions.

United Methodists on the interreligious health-care campaign's organizing committee are the Rev. Jose Galindo of McAllen, Texas, and Frances Hubbard, a laywoman, of New York.

Mr. Galindo oversees ministries to Mexican immigrants housed in poor areas known as colonias. Ms. Hubbard is a community health care professional active in black neighborhoods of New York.

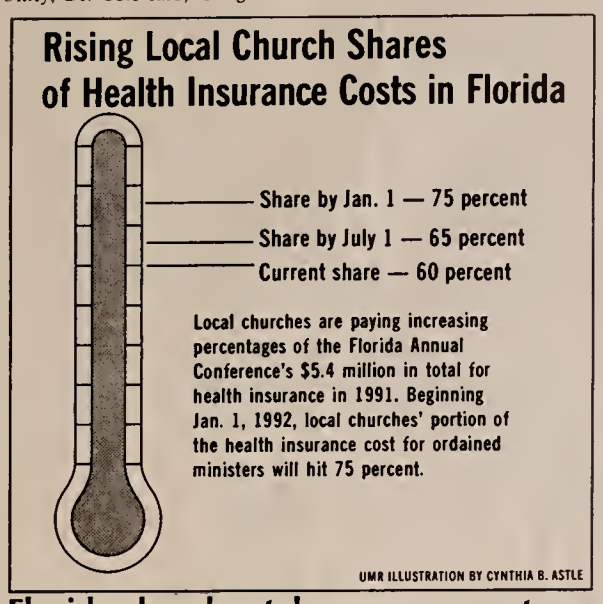
Health-agency executive Dr. Cole said, "We felt it was important that the campaign have representation from those who are most affected by the lack of adequate health care—low-income people, people of color, people with AIDS, the homeless."

Dr. Cole said he hopes United Methodists can understand that the current crisis in health care insurance for United Methodist clergy (see story below) is related to the nationwide health care crisis.

"A traditional role of United Methodist clergy has been to lift up the social concerns of justice and compassion," he explained.

"I think the clergy are going to recognize that their problem [of health care coverage] is part of the larger problem and that the solution to the clergy problem needs to be part of the larger solution.

"I'm hoping the clergy will join with us and say 'Help me and help my members.' "



Florida churches take on more cost

LAKELAND, Fla.—Among the latest United Methodist regional units to shift more of the health insurance burden to local congregations was the Florida Annual Conference, which met May 27-31. This chart shows the range of increase that will be assumed by local congregations for their pastors' health insurance. Local churches and/or participants themselves already pay the full cost for health care coverage for lay church workers, said Beverley C. Berry, conference treasurer. Florida's move is one of the latest in a series of denominationwide efforts to relieve annual conference budgets of the burden of skyrocketing health care costs, as profiled by the Reporter in 1990.

Clergy health insurance proposal getting fine-tuning

Even as United Methodism's regional annual conferences this spring and summer struggled through difficult decisions regarding health insurance, a national unit of the denomination was refining a proposal it hopes will bring some of those costs under control.

The General Board of Pensions was assigned by the church's policymaking 1988 General Conference to study whether denominationwide health insurance for ordained clergy, lay church workers, their spouses and dependents is feasible.

The pensions board's Health Insurance Task Force conducted regional meetings in April and early May, said Gerald Beam, chief of participant services at the pensions board.

Input from those meetings is being used to revise a health-insurance proposal which will be discussed when the task force meets in July in Boston, he said.

An early draft of the proposal has received "mostly favorable" response, he added.

One main asset of the denominationwide proposal so far, Mr. Beam said, appears to be the potential to "spread the loss"—that is, to lessen the impact of multiple or catastrophic medical claims against the amount paid in premium.

He noted that one or two "catastrophic illness" claims—which can amount to $100,000 or more—would be paid more easily by the proceeds from a pool of 100,000 participants than from an insurance pool of a few hundred participants in a typical plan within any one annual conference.

The estimate of 100,000 participants in a denominationwide pool is based on the number of active and retired United Methodist clergy, lay church workers, their spouses, dependents and survivors, he explained.

"We don't believe we'll stem the tide in health care costs; we have no control over that," Mr. Beam said. "But we could achieve significant savings with the sheer numbers of a larger [participant] pool."

Mr. Beam added that the United Methodist task force hopes to benefit from a six-month, $200,000 study recently authorized by a group known as The Church Health Care Network (see UMR, June 7).

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German woman gets World Methodist Peace Award

From news reports

Amidst music by Mozart, Bach and Schubert, the World Methodist Council presented its 1991 World Methodist Peace Award June 8 in Leipzig, Germany, to a German Lutheran laywoman.

Barbel Bohley, a Berlin-born artist who sold her own works at auction to help political prisoners in East Germany, received the medallion during a special portion of the United Methodist Annual Conference presided over by Bishop Ruediger R. Minor.

Making the presentation were the World Methodist Council's president, Bishop Lawi Imathiu of Kenya, and General Secretary the Rev. Joe Hale of Lake Junaluska, N.C.

A third signature on the award certificate was that of Dr. Melita Tenner, a medical doctor from Prosen, Germany, who nominated Mrs. Bohley. Dr. Tenner is a member of the World Methodist Council presidium.

Dr. Hale told the Reporter that both the 1991 award to Mrs. Bohley and the 1990 award to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev were voted last September by World Methodist Council officers.

After attempts to make the presentation in Moscow fell through, the award to President Gorbachev was accepted in Washington by an officer of the Soviet embassy.

Dr. Hale added, "When the 1990 and 1991 awards are seen together, one sees that what Mr. Gorbachev allowed to happen with regard to the German Democratic Republic and the destruction of the Berlin wall is the same reality Mrs. Bohley, and others, were bringing pressure to see happen."

The World Methodist Peace Award, first given in 1977, is based on three criteria: Creativity, courage and consistency.

Mrs. Bohley was cited for:

Creativity: " ... You have personally and generously contributed to the families of those in prison by selling your own works of art at auction to help them. You have fasted on behalf of the cause of peace and justice. . . ."

Courage: "You have been courageous in your resistance to the production and storing of arms, in your opposition to conscription laws, even personally approaching and challenging former leaders of the Republic. Because of this you were required to give up membership in the Executive Committee of the Federation of Berlin's Fine Artists and were forbidden to exhibit your works. You were arrested on several occasions and were forced to leave your country temporarily."

Consistency: ". . . Your difficult work [has been] sustained over a period of more than ten years of political restriction and oppression. Your acts of opposition pre-dated the turn in society that now has made you a symbolic figure."

Dr. Hale told the Leipzig gathering, "The quest for peace takes many forms. The reconciler who seeks to bring hostile parties together; the prophet who challenges injustice; the visionary who lifts us to see a better world; and ordinary persons who witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ that looses the power of forgiveness and gives people hope.

"This award is about the will for peace, about fairness, about compassion, about diplomacy. It stands as a witness that there is a better way to settle disputes than by adding to the level of bondage, suffering and deprivation in the world."

This was the 12th peace award given by the World Methodist Council. Previous winners include Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

Ex-bishop named to pastorate

United Methodist News Service

Former United Methodist Bishop James Armstrong of Denver will become senior pastor of the 800-member First Congregational Church of Winter Park, Fla., a suburb of Orlando, July 1.

The appointment was announced during June 3-6 sessions of the United Methodist Rocky Mountain Annual Conference in Fort Collins, Colo.

For seven years he has been visiting professor of preaching and social ministry at United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Dr. Armstrong, 66, began his ministry as a student pastor in New Port Richey, Fla., in 1947.

He resigned as president of the National Council of Churches and as a United Methodist bishop in November 1983 and surrendered his ministerial credentials in 1985, saying he had "failed my wife and family."

In 1988, his 45-year marriage to the former Phyllis Schaeffer ended in divorce and he married Sue Peterson of Denver.

In October 1990, Dr. Armstrong asked the denomination's South Indiana Annual Conference to restore his ministerial credentials but dropped the request a few weeks later saying, "I'm afraid it would just cause needless furor."

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Faith connections

WOMEN'S HISTORY: Research grants for work on women's history in United Methodism have been given to two women by the church's General Commission on Archives and History. **Paula Buford,** a doctoral candidate at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., received $500 for work on "the lost tradition of women as pastoral caregivers from 1925 to 1967." **Patricia Sanford Brown** of Flint, Mich., received $500 to continue transcribing the diaries of Lizzie Dravenstatt, a Methodist laywoman who lived in Michigan in the late 19th Century.

OLDER ADULTS LEADER: The Rev. **Richard H. Gentzler Jr.**, pastor of Pleasant Gap (Pa.) United Methodist Church, has been named by the church's General Board of Discipleship as director of education and ministries for older adults. Dr. Gentzler has also served as a nursing home chaplain and has taught at college and high school levels. He holds a master's degree from United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington and a doctorate in pastoral care and counseling from United Methodist-related Boston University School of Theology.

VISN ADDS OUTLETS: The Vision Interfaith Satellite Network (VISN) will debut in 100 additional communities, including New York and Chicago, during June and July. The expansion brings the number of potential subscriber households to more than 9 million, according to **Nelson Price,** veteran United Methodist communicator who serves as VISN's president and chief executive officer. The interfaith cable network has no figures, however, on how many people actually watch its programming, which includes "Catch the Spirit," the television magazine show produced by United Methodist Communications.

DEADLINE APPROACHES: Registration deadline for "Youth '91," the biennial gathering of United Methodist senior high youth, is June 30. Forms should be mailed immediately to Youth '91, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0840. The Aug. 5-9 event at the University of Missouri in Columbia will be highlighted by the appearances by Grammy award winning gospel group, **"Take 6;"** singer-songwriter **Tony Melendez;** and the **Montana Logging and Ballet Company.** The event is sponsored by the church's General Board of Discipleship.

NEW MINISTRY: The Rev. **Warren Hill,** associate general secretary of the church's General Commission on Religion and Race in Washington, will become pastor of Dixon United Methodist Church in Dayton, Ohio, in the West Ohio Annual Conference at the end of June. A 20-year member of the East Ohio Annual Conference, Mr. Hill served five years at the religion and race agency.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Data show ethnic part of church

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

The United Methodist Church is moving toward answering a question that has been the subject of speculation but little hard data for several decades—the number of racial and ethnic members in the overall membership total of 8.9 million in the United States and Puerto Rico.

Official membership statistics are gathered by the church's General Council on Finance and Administration in Evanston, Ill.

In 1987, directors of that agency asked that a count of racial ethnic members be made annually beginning with 1989.

Such a tabulation never has been undertaken in the United Methodist Church, created in 1968 through union of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches. It generally had been held that counting members by racial origin would be inconsistent with the church's stand against racism.

First and tentative results of an official count have been released.

With 75 percent of the denomination's 37,400 churches included, but with some significant annual conferences absent, the total as of Dec. 31, 1989, is approximately 353,000, or about 4.5 percent of the total membership in the United States and Puerto Rico.

The tabulation shows about 244,300 black United Methodists; 44,200 Asian Americans; 39,500 Hispanic Americans; 17,500 Native Americans and 7,000 Pacific Islanders.

The Rev. John Schreiber, head of the GCFA records department, said the count is based on official reports submitted by local churches through annual (regional) conference statisticians or on totals for conferences.

Missing from official reports and projections are totals from 14 of the 72 annual conferences in the United States and Puerto Rico. Most of those 14 have relatively few racial and ethnic members, but two of them, Baltimore and New York, can be expected to have substantial numbers.

A 1985 estimate by a researcher for the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries put the racial and ethnic total at about 466,000.

PHOTO COURTESY BAPTIST PRESS

A Kurdish refugee gets a boost from a fellow Kurd and from Southern Baptist volunteer Jim Furgerson (left) of Memphis, Tenn., at a refugee camp in Iran. The men are erecting a canopy over a portable kitchen to be operated by a Southern Baptist volunteer feeding team. Tents put together by United Methodists are on their way to this same refugee area (story at right).

Layman hits on tents as way to help Kurds

United Methodist News Service

Dan Robinson could not quite forget the television news story about Kurdish children who had frozen to death in the night air after getting soaked in a rainstorm.

The Gainesville, Fla., United Methodist prayed and consulted with friends about how to help the Middle East refugees.

"If we can send billions of dollars over there to kill people, we can send a few dollars or something to shelter people," he reasoned.

Became interfaith effort

Eventually, an idea came to him: tents. The idea was expanded into an interfaith effort and the donation of 14 tents and one tarp to Church World Service, the relief agency of the National Council of Churches.

As of June 5, the tents were in Baltimore, awaiting shipment to refugees who are being moved from camps in Turkey, according to Lloyd Rollins of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Tents will be distributed by the Middle East Council of Churches.

Mr. Robinson turned to fellow members of a local ecumenical "Emmaus Walk" prayer and study group with his idea. They recommended he contact UMCOR and the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Southern Baptists needed four tents to serve as feeding stations for Kurdish refugees in the Iranian mountains.

Mr. Robinson secured them from his friends, Bill and Lisa Rhan of Copperhill, Tenn., who make tents to support United Methodist ministry in Appalachia.

Then, Mr. Rollins contacted Mr. Robinson to request for UMCOR 10-12 tents, which would be channeled through Church World Service.

Mr. Robinson called Mr. Rhan again, who said he could buy the tent fabric from a friend at low cost.

"Without any other planning, he drove over there and picked up the material—two tons of it . . . and headed to Gainesville," Mr. Robinson added.

Mr. Robinson sought assistance from the missions committee of his church, Trinity United Methodist, and received a $1,000 check and help in lining up volunteers. Nearly 100 people were standing ready when Mr. Rhan arrived.

Created in seven days

The tents were created in seven days. Much of the piecing together of the brilliantly colored plastic material was done by a heat process, while stress areas were stitched together by four women with sewing machines.

In addition to United Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, several Jewish families and students from the University of Florida, a Kurdish family participated, bringing native foods and music.

"We needed someone who could write in Arabic and Kurdish," Mr. Robinson said. "They were unbelievably pleased that they could do something to help their people."

Bishop hopeful following Angola ceasefire

United Methodist News Service

The May 31 signing of a peace treaty in Angola will affect all its citizens, including church people, according to a United Methodist bishop there.

"With the ceasefire implementation and the end of the war, life will certainly become more livable for everyone," Bishop Emilio de Carvalho told United Methodist News Service.

Although the southern African nation became independent from Portugal in 1975, civil war had continued since between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which formed the new government, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita).

Unita received military aid from the United States and South Africa, while the Angola government was supported by the Soviet Union and by Cuban troops.

Under the peace treaty, the two sides agreed to an official ceasefire as a first step toward building a democratic-style multiparty political system, working toward a market economy and creating a unified army.

More than 70,000 Christians gathered at the sports stadium in Luanda, the capital, for a June 2 service of thanksgiving, where, according to Bishop de Carvalho, they were challenged to work "for reconciliation, peace, justice and reconstruction" of Angola.

"This is how the church in Angola has already been a part of the healing process through the years and for the future," he said.

The United Methodist Church, established in Angola more than 100 years ago, has 85,000-100,000 members in that country.

Bishop de Carvalho, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, said many Angolans still doubt the "sincerity" of Unita. Unita has been accused of deliberately attacking civilians or cutting off access to food supplies.

"We have had negative experiences in many instances," the bishop said about Unita. "There are, however, strong signs of hope. Special regional commissions of military from both sides are working together toward implementation of the ceasefire and are taking other security measures."

A multiparty system also is being created in preparation for general elections in 1992 and "no one is being pressured to take sides," according to the bishop.

Spotlighted singer recalls days in church youth choir

From a United Methodist choir to the Broadway stage is a long leap, rarely made.

Yet Laurie Stephenson made it, and made it seem easy.

The petite, blond singer now touring the United States in "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber" was raised in a United Methodist parsonage and nurtured in a United Methodist choir program.

The daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. William T. Stephenson of Dallas, said she had a strong foundation in the Christian faith.

Grew up at the church

"I grew up being at the church all of the time," she said. "All of my friends, all of my life was involved in the church."

Dallas First Church members encouraged her as a child to perform in church and school music programs, to attend symphony and opera concerts and, when she was older, to perform in church and local musical theater productions.

Not long after college graduation, she went to New York to visit a friend. Just for the fun of it, she said, she auditioned for the 1979 Christmas Show at Radio City Music Hall.

To her great surprise, she made it. Not only that, she became a featured soloist in the show.

One thing led to another

One thing led to another, she said: television appearances, parts in national tours of "Annie" and "Camelot;" off-Broadway productions of "Dames at Sea" and "A Chorus Line" and the starring role of Sandy in "Grease."

Now, at age 35, she's on her second national tour of "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber."

"Being on the road is tough," she said. "But it also gives me a lot of time to contemplate just how lucky I am and how grateful I am for God's giving me these opportunities."

She also has time to reflect on how meaningful the church has been in her life, she said. She and her husband, attorney Todd Caliguire, hope any children they may have will find the same warm church experiences she had.

Laurie Stephenson
. . . from choir to star

Music up, spotlight on

Meanwhile, night after night, in a darkened theater the orchestra swells. Into the spotlight steps the unmistakable image of Evita Peron, her blond hair tightly pulled back into a chignon, her long earrings glittering in the bright light.

The full skirt of her strapless white evening gown billows behind her as she steps lightly to the microphone and begins to sing, "Don't cry for me, Argentina."

As she finishes, arms and face raised to the sky, the audience roars with applause and shouts of "bravo!"

Laurie Stephenson, former choir-girl, takes a bow.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

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Louisiana United Methodist
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

8 NUMBER 4 | Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 | JUNE 21, 1991

Important Notice

The Louisiana Annual Conference has designated Sunday, June 30, 1991, as Conference Disaster Relief Sunday. On this day, churches throughout the Conference are encouraged to contribute toward assistance provided by the local church to those affected by natural disasters.

Checks should be payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference. Please include an Advance Special Sheet and report it on line 4400. Send to 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Church Parties

Charles Simmons

This weeks column has been written by Dr. Charles B. Simmons, Senior Pastor Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

Since Annual Conference ended last Thursday, I have wondered what about it was worth remembering or writing about. Should I use this, "the bishop's space," to tell of the moving moments of worship we shared, the poignant preaching of Fred Craddock, the exciting if not expedient delegate elections, or the vigorous debates on matters that really matter? So many good things happened in such a short period, however, selecting only a few to highlight seemed neither wise nor warranted. Thus I've decided to let you peruse for yourself the pictures and comments on this page (or the ones still fresh in your mind), while I share a more personal insight:

One night of Conference my wife and I went out for snacks with a group of friends I have known for sixteen years. Almost by ritual, immediately after one of the evening worship services, this group goes somewhere for food and fellowship, and this time it was to a local restaurant. These were the first ministers and spouses I met when I returned to Louisiana after seminary, and their friendship has meant the most. We come together as often as possible, and always at Annual Conference.

Now had you seen us together (or heard us, since our combined voices sounded much more like a college pep rally than a casual gathering of colleagues!), you might have said: "There was a joyful spirit among them!" We enjoy ourselves, and over the years have cleared out more than one restaurant, because the other diners could not appreciate the excitement of our reunion. We laugh with each other and at each other, and enjoy doing both. We never identify ourselves as "preachers" and, at face value, we look like any other group of close friends.

However, our little ensemble has something else. **Beyond the joyous spirit that ignites our parties is the Holy Spirit that unites our lives.** We do not always laugh. Sometimes we cry. Oftentimes we listen when one of our number hurts. From time to time we have both given to and received from each other. This was the group of disciples who welcomed me into the Conference and supported me when I have needed it most through the years. And every other member of our little society feels as loved as I do.

I share this with you as a reminder, because my experience is the same as all of you. This is not just a "church group." This is the Church. When God's Spirit binds human beings together in love, "church" ceases to be just an institution and starts also to be a living organism. And it happens all the time in your life and mine.

So during this season of Pentecost when you remember the Holy Spirit coming alive inside the hearts of those early Christians, also rejoice that the same Spirit even now binds our hearts to Christians far and near, producing a community of compassion that nothing in this world can destroy.

I am so grateful to be a part of Christ's Church, and especially the Louisiana Conference of United Methodism. How about you?

Shalom,
Charles B. Simmons

Shown listening attentively are elected delegates (clergy and lay) to General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

Conference delegates hand in voting ballots for representatives to General Conference.

Dr. Charles B. Simmons is shown reporting on VISION 2000.

Dr. Tom Matheny with the latest information on the new Conference Center.

Dr. Fred Craddock preaches at the Memorial Service.

VISION 2000 Alive and at Work at Annual Conference

The 1991 Louisiana Annual Conference assembled June 3 to 6 in Shreveport for business, fellowship and worship. Following through with Louisiana United Methodism's ten-year dream for a vital church, the Conference leaders stressed plans and hopes for her future.

Under the vision of "New Beginnings," Bishop William B. Oden presided over a four-day session that welcomed 1200 delegates, ordained 13 deacons and nine elders, consecrated two diaconal ministers and paid tribute to 11 retiring clergy. Delegates also elected six lay and six clergy delegates to the 1992 General Conference and six lay and six clergy delegates to Jurisdictional Conference. Mr. Paul White, Conference Lay Leader, leads the delegation.

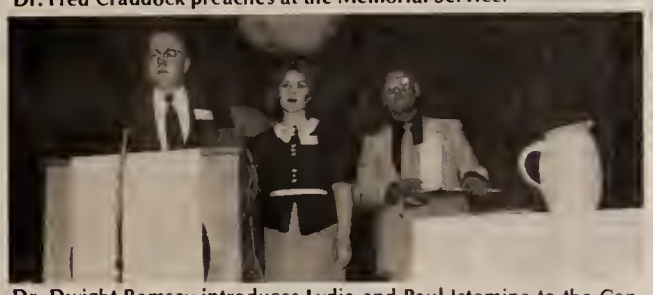
Dr. Fred B. Craddock, Conference Preacher, explored the Church's vision through themes of memory, postponement, judgment and lure. Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder, Conference Devotional Leader, paid tribute to United Methodism's vision through her heritage of heart-warming music as worship, while Dr. Jim Holsinger, laity speaker, reminded United Methodist lay men and women that Christ's vision can only be sought through a vital, awakened membership.

Specific business on the agenda included feedback on the progress of VISION 2000 which reported on the success of the Louisiana Gathering and its follow-up, A Day of Exploration, in which 80 persons were invited to explore their interest in representive ministry. Future plans will concentrate on four major emphases: Spiritual Growth; New Disciples; Competent and Dedicated Clergy and Lay Leadership; and Outreach and Mission.

Other major agenda items were reports of the purchase of property for the Louisiana Conference Center, the continuation of the legislative struggle for Louisiana wetlands and resolutions passed that will be sent to General Conference for consideration. These resolutions ask to keep the current legislation on homosexuality instead of the proposed legislation (sent to General COM) as well as resolutions 1) endorsing the VISION interfaith satellite network, 2) amending paragraph 71G on abortion, and 3) adopting "Campus Ministry: Mission at the Center" as a Special Program for the 1993-96 quadrennium (sent to General Conference).

Other resolutions passed for action in Louisiana were 1) an expression of prayers and concern for those involved in the war; 2) stricter laws regarding toxic waste disposal in ethnic minority neighborhoods; 3) a reassessment on the state-wide teacher evaluation proposal; 4) opposition to the voucher system in education; 5) opposition to a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers in the construction of a floodgate that would cause damage to Dulac, home of the Houma Indians and site for a UM Community Center and church; and a resolution asking Governor Buddy Roemer to veto legislation on abortion passed by the state legislature.

A special highlight of this year's Conference was the introduction of Dr. Paul Istomina and his daughter, Lydia. The Reverend Dwight Ramsey, pastor of Shreveport's Broadmoor UMC, invited the couple to Louisiana to represent the first United Methodist Church established on Russian soil in 70 years. Ms. Istomina, lay-leader of the 600-and-growing congregation, brought greetings from their town of Sverdlovsk. Mr. Ramsey established this church and is eager for Louisiana United Methodists to share in its beginnings. A collection was taken towards the million dollars needed to build a church there.


Dr. Dwight Ramsey introduces Lydia and Paul Istomina to the Conference. Lydia is Lay Leader of the new Methodist Church in Sverdlovsk, Russia.

Mr. Paul White, Conference Lay Leader, presides over Laity Hour.

Mr. Boyd Baun, Conference President of UMM, presents The Charles Goodgame Award to Mr. Bob Sides of Lafayette. This award is presented each year to the United Methodist Men member who shows outstanding dedication, not only to UMM, but to the entire United Methodist Church. The plaque, which was started in 1987, is placed at First UMC, Pineville, home of Mr. Charles Goodgame.

Youth leaders Kenny Morrow and Lori Bridges.

Bishop Oden opens Conference under the banner representing Conference's theme "This is the Day of New Beginnings."

Korean Singers from Korean UMC, Leesville entertain at Annual Conference.

The Reverend Cyril A. Verret of Dulac/Clanton Chapel and leader of the Houma Indians, is presented during Board of Church and Society Report at Annual Conference.

Elected Delegates

Clergy
Alfred Norris
Phil Woodland
Carole Cotton-Winn
Ray Branton
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Amy Ward
Carolyn Dove
Carl Stewart
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Seola Callahan
Dorothy Mae Taylor

Alternate
Welton Brumfield
Pat Hogan
Vera Packer
Fred Loy

Executive Session of clergy meets first day of Annual Conference.

Mrs. Cynthia Wilson-Felder calls delegates together in song.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorials

An eastward opportunity

One of the ripest opportunities for Christian outreach in the late 20th Century is also one of the most surprising because of its location: Eastern Europe.

Consider:

✓ The vision of a United Methodist pastor and his congregation in Shreveport, La., has sparked the establishment of the first-ever United Methodist congregation in the Russian Republic (see stories elsewhere in this issue).

✓ A recent international consultation on The United Methodist Church in Europe, held in Vienna, Austria, concluded that "the changed situation in Europe is a challenge given to the entire church by God."

✓ Political reforms sweeping through Eastern Europe over the past 18 months have opened windows for church agencies to make concrete plans to extend their efforts into the region.

We believe these and similar recent events are tantalizing straws in the wind regarding the future of Christianity.

Specifically, the spirit of "glasnost" or openness is presenting Christians with near-miraculous opportunities to influence the spiritual dimension of post-communist Eastern Europe.

Here are some of the opportunities:

■ The easing of travel restrictions in Eastern Europe makes it possible for Americans to visit these areas more freely. Individuals and congregations as well as leaders from church agencies can be involved in outreach to the region.

■ Even the simplest of our faith practices may influence Eastern Europeans for generations to come. For instance, Sunday school classes for adults—something we take for granted—made an enormous impression on two of our new Russian United Methodists during their recent U.S. visit.

■ Eastern Europeans' struggle with political and economic reforms offers us a chance to export to them something more than Western materialism. Specifically, we can teach Christian ethics—at a crucial time in their development—to people whose countries have operated with an ethic of expediency for generations.

Most importantly, Eastern Europe's current situation offers Christians an unparalleled opportunity to introduce people to "a better hope through which we draw near to God" (Hebrews 7:19).

Observers of the European situation have repeatedly cited a tremendous spiritual hunger welling up among the people. It's important to note that this spiritual hunger occurs amid anxieties over the fall of communism's cradle-to-grave social structure.

However, in contrast to the despair exhibited in some Eastern European locations, our Russian sisters and brothers tell us that their lives have been infused with hope as a result of their new faith in Jesus Christ.

How will others in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe hear this word of hope unless someone tells them?

Could that someone be from your congregation?

Could that someone be you?

. . .And models to heed

As we consider Christian outreach in Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, (see preceding editorial), we can be enlightened by the examples of two United Methodist congregations in the United States.

The 2,800-member Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La., and the 100-member Karnack (Texas) United Methodist Church could hardly be less alike.

Yet each, according to its respective resources, has substantially supported the establishment of the first United Methodist congregation in Sverdlovsk, Russia (see story elsewhere in this issue).

What the two congregations have contributed to their American counterparts, however, is even more valuable.

Their efforts to aid new Russian United Methodists have demonstrated that faith as small as a mustard seed can move mountains—even when the mountains seem as immovable as Russia's Urals where Sverdlovsk lies.

Broadmoor and Karnack give us excellent models against which to measure our own vision and vitality, whether our mission be in Russia or in our own communities.

FaithLine

Readers split on global missions board move

The Reporter invited readers to tell us whether they believe the location of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries to be important and if they favor a recommendation citing the feasibility of moving the board from New York City (see UMR, June 7).

Responses were nearly evenly divided between readers who favor keeping the global missions board in New York City and those who favor moving it. Some readers offered alternatives to the task force report.

Here is a sampling of readers' views:

The Rev. Kent Millard, Sioux Falls, S.D.: I think the General Board of Global Ministries should move out of New York, because I have known excellent employees of the board who could not remain there because of the cost of living in New York. I think we are losing good employees to our church because we maintain the agency in one of the most expensive places to live in the nation.

Connie Takamine, Denver, Colo.: The location of the General Board of Global Ministries is an important issue to me. I do not agree with the position of the committee to relocate the General Board. I think that we need to concentrate on building the Church of Jesus Christ wherever we are located.

Josh Morriss, Texarkana, Texas: The city of New York is the greatest city in the world for lots of things. Like Broadway shows, the Statue of Liberty, and lots of other things. In my estimation, it's not the best place for the General Board of Global Ministries. I'm not an insider on how Global Ministries operates, but my perception is that staff is composed of New Yorkers who do not represent, nor do they reflect, the mission priorities of United Methodists. Areas such as St. Louis, Charlotte or Nashville would serve the church better.

John L. Powell, Princeton, N.J.: Our platform for mission, as in Acts, should be where tongues are spoken and there is a miracle of understanding. That place is still New York, with Atlanta a second choice and San Francisco a third. In whatever city, the site should be like those or perhaps even a model for those for where our missionaries will be.

Phil Shriver, Foster, Oregon: I think it is very important that the General Board of Global Ministries be moved away from New York City and the influence of the National Council of Churches headquarters at the same address. We as United Methodists have let one of the world's greatest evangelical missionary programs disintegrate while subcontracting our mission work to the NCC with its often questionable philosophies and goals.

The Rev. Dorothy M. Field, Shimoken, Pa.: My preference would be for the board to remain in New York for several reasons. One of them that New York still is something of the heartbeat of much that is going on that is of concern to the board, particularly the area of international or world mission. The other concern is that the cost of moving might very well negate any savings to be realized in the moving.

Charles M. Smith, Raleigh, N.C.: I think that the General Board of Global Ministries should move from New York City for two reasons. Economics is first. Many other places would probably accommodate our work more cheaply. And stewardship is always a concern for Christians. Second, demographics. The strength of the United Methodist Church does not lie so much in northeastern United States as it does more in the Midwest and South. Therefore, I would give serious consideration to looking at St. Louis or Kansas City. They are in the heartland and easily accessible by air.

Leora Hatch, Miami, Fla.: There's absolutely no sense in moving the General Board of Global Ministries. A global agency needs to be in a globally representative community, not some corner of the Midwest. Mission decisions that are made by directors from all over the world are not going to be affected by the location of the offices.

Donna Derr, Lafayette Hill, Pa. Where it's located is really not of major concern, with this exception: If you were saying it is more expensive to be in New York, San Francisco seems like a very unreasonable alternative. It would depend on why the reasons it's there. If it makes sense, keep it there. If not, then move.

Betsy Ewing, Dunedin, Fla.: Having served as member of the executive staff of the General Board of Global Ministries for 20 years, I see no major reason for the board to remain in New York City other than for the conveniences and options related to travel schedules. On the other hand, with all the human need existing in the United States and communities around the world, I would consider it irresponsible for this denomination to spend the time, money and energy on a move that would be costly and disruptive to the outreach mission to which God calls it to the lives of countless people. Lest it be forgotten, a very costly study was done on this same issue just a decade ago.

Bob Read, Conroe, Texas: For the sake of the church, the General Board of Global Ministries must move from New York to a cheaper, more sensible location. I lived in Brooklyn, N.Y., and I know that costs could be reduced both for the general board and the staff. The work ethics and productivity will improve. A central time zone location would improve communications with membership across the country. Travel would be shorter and cheaper. Visibility and sensitivity to the mainstream membership will increase. Today they are either disliked or they're invisible.

Victor Goldschmidt, Lafayette, Ind.: The three functions that we have to address are being done by three divisions. The location is dependent on those functions. The National Division obviously needs to move to some place like St. Louis. Women's Division should move to an excellent facility such as Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. The World Division should move to a location where airline travel is most effective internationally—Dallas, for instance, or maybe even Europe. It is naive to think in this day and age that three divisions have to be in the same geographical center. We must optimize their location according to their function.

Dorothy Emerson, Harrisonburg, Va.: I feel it is important that we keep the General Board of Global Ministries in New York City and not spend money to move when money is needed for missionary support.

My Witness

He taught me what it means to be a real disciple

By EZRA E. JONES

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Ezra Earl Jones is General Secretary of the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Probably most of us who claim Christ's name are disciples at some times, but not at others.

I have become increasingly aware, however, that some of us (perhaps many of us) rarely are disciples.

We are not "crazy" enough! We are too refined, rational, serious, sincere, mannered, sophisticated, educated, and proper.

Jesus talked about being like a child, and Paul talked about being a fool. Most of us are just not crazy enough.

Someone 'crazy' enough

Someone who was "crazy" enough was Woodrow Seals, a dedicated United Methodist and a federal judge, who died late last year.

I attended his memorial service at his beloved St. Stephen's Church in Houston, Texas. The stories told about this man evoked both tears and laughter. I know a lot better now how close are the actions of crying and laughing.

One of Woodrow's colleagues spoke for the 50 or so federal judges who were present at the memorial service. Judge James DeAnda recalled that Woodrow had been the affirmative action conscience of the federal court for the entire Southern District and that Woodrow had ruled that the children of illegal aliens are entitled to a public-school education.

Woodrow, who died at the age of 72, was championing the rights of women, racial minorities, and others before I was even born—a little bit crazy, I would say, for a Louisianian living in Texas four or five decades ago.

Paid pastors' meals

A former pastor attested to Woodrow's "craziness." The Rev. Roger Shumate recalled that Woodrow paid, in advance, for a year's worth of meals at United Methodist Men's meetings for the pastors of the church. He wanted to ensure that the pastors would have no excuse for not attending.

I said a few words about Woodrow at the service, too. He had served for eight years as a voting member of the General Board of Discipleship. During that time, he had called me often with "crazy" new ideas.

One such idea was the Society of St. Stephen, a group within his congregation that was committed to serving the poor, the homeless, and the dispossessed; that is, a group of people who wanted to be real disciples.

Woodrow wondered if other congregations ought to have such societies, so we wrote to all United Methodist pastors to tell them about the idea. Today, scores of congregations have Societies of St. Stephen. We still serve them with resources through the General Board of Discipleship.

Began 'peace advocates'

I also told those at the memorial service about the time Woodrow called to say he thought every church should have a "peace advocate"—someone in the congregation who would keep the issue of peace before the members.

He said that he had prevailed upon his own church board to appoint him as the first peace advocate at St. Stephen's Church. Again, I wrote to all the pastors in our denomination and invited them to initiate a "peace advocate" position in their congregations.

Woodrow Seals

In a matter of months, there were more than 3,000 peace advocates serving in United Methodist congregations across our nation.

One day, Woodrow called my office before I had arrived. When I returned his call, his secretary said, "Judge Seals is on the bench today, but he has a phone there and he left word for me to put you through."

She did, and he talked in a low voice for nearly an hour (with an occasional, "Excuse me just a minute") about his latest passion for faithfulness as a disciple.

> ***"What I remember is that taking care of the people Jesus died for was more important to him than anything else."***

I do not remember his idea on that particular day. What I do remember is taking care of the people Jesus died for was more important to him than anything else.

Many others have their stories about Judge Woodrow Seals. Some stories about him would make you laugh out loud, but you might also do as I did following his memorial service.

I cried for myself, even as my heart was laughing for joy. I cried because I am not more like him—a disciple, a real one.

What others are saying

"Perhaps there is no better summary of the good steward than the paradoxical statement: 'Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it.' The steward in the process of investing his life in the causes of Christ discovers life at its deepest level."

—The Rev. Stone Caraway, Louisiana Annual Conference treasurer

* * *

"Jesus said, 'And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward' (Matthew 10:42).... It may have been easy in Jesus' day to hand someone a cup of water. However, a cup of 'cold' water would have to come fresh from a deep well or spring. To secure a cup of 'cold' water meant that a person had to be intentional in showing kindness."

—The Rev. Thomas H. Cloyd, council on ministries director, Tennessee Annual Conference.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"If any one serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him." (RSV).

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : _____

(Last week's answer: Ephesians 5:20)

Readings for week of June 24

Monday: Psalms 48:1-8
Tuesday: Psalms 48:9-14
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 5:1-12
Thursday: Mark 4:35-41
Friday: Mark 5:1-20
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 5:16-17
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 5:18-6:2

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Faith watch

VOLCANO ERUPTS: Members of 29 United Methodist Churches were evacuated from their homes last week, following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. The 4,800-foot Mount Pinatubo, dormant for at least 600 years, began to shoot streams of ash and steam 15 miles high on June 9. Volcanic ash fell over about seven towns in Zambales province west of the crater. **Anne Uander**, area executive for the Southeast Asia-Pacific office in the General Board of Global Ministries, said some 35,000 people were evacuated to government shelters. United Methodist Bishop **Emerito P. Nacpil** (Manila Area) has asked ministers to assess emergency relief efforts. A $5,000 grant from the United Methodist Committee on Relief was sent last month when another volcano erupted in May.

DISNEY SCUTTLES LOTTERY: Complaining that people misunderstood the target audience, Walt Disney Co. officials and **Peter Lynch**, president of Lottery Innovations, have killed plans for a television lottery show. In May the United Methodist Council of Bishops decried the plan, saying they feared it would attract children to gambling. Mr. Lynch said the outcry was frustrating because children were not the proposed audience.

NCC OFFICIALS HEAD EAST: National Council of Churches officials leave Saturday, June 22, for a follow up visit to assess relief efforts in the Middle East after the Persian Gulf war. The Rev. **Joan Brown Campbell** is chief executive officer of the 40-member-denomination Christian organization, which includes United Methodist support. Ms. Campbell, during an interview at the Reporter offices in Dallas, said she, **Lani Havens**, director of Church World Service (relief arm of the NCC), and **Dale Bishop**, director of the NCC's Middle East office, will go. If visas are obtained, they hope to visit Baghdad, Iraq; Amman, Jordan; Beirut, Lebanon, and some Kurdish relief sites, Ms. Campbell said last week.

Joan Campbell

ANTI-IRS MOVE IS UPHELD: A federal appeals court upheld a July 1990 district court decision that halted an Internal Revenue Service inquiry into the Church of Scientology of Boston. U.S. District Judge **Joseph L. Tauro** had said the IRS demand broke the 1984 Church Audit Procedures Act because the IRS failed to show a "legitimate purpose" for the demand. The U.S. First Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that ruling. **Alex Jones**, a Scientology spokesperson, called the decision a victory "for any church facing a capricious audit from the IRS."

BAYLOR REJECTS NEW BID: Baylor University in Waco, Texas, the world's largest Baptist university, will not budge from the step it took last year to establish a governing board outside the reach of Southern Baptist fundamentalists who have taken control of other denomination agencies and institutions. The university recently rejected the latest proposal by the executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to permit the convention, an official arm of the denomination, to directly elect 25 percent of the members of a board of regents and to have an indirect say in the choice of another 50 percent of the regents.

CHRISTIAN/JEW RIFT GROWS: The opposition of the German peace movement to the war in the Persian Gulf has produced new tension between German Christians and Jews, who feel the protesters were insensitive to the dangers faced by Israel during the conflict, according to religious leaders including Dr. **Michael Brumlik**, a professor of education and political science at the University of Frankfurt. Dr. Brumlik, a Jew, charged that Christians in Germany still have a "deep-seated anti-Semitism." Christians should finally come to understand that Jesus was a Jew, he remarked.

Compiled from news and staff reports

First UM congregation started in Russia

Pastor's 'spark' and laywoman's 'fuel' ignite flame of faith in formerly closed Soviet city

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SHREVEPORT, La.—An American pastor provided the spark and a Russian laywoman, at considerable cost to herself and her family, has fanned it into the "flame" of the first United Methodist congregation in the Soviet republic of Russia.

How the Rev. Dwight Ramsey of Shreveport and laywoman Lydia Istomina of Sverdlovsk started the congregation is a story to rival the missionary tales of the early Christians.

Cultural exchange

In July 1990, Mr. Ramsey, senior pastor of 2,800-member Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, accompanied a cultural exchange trip of 17 Shreveport youths, including his two teen-age daughters, to the Soviet Union.

Their visit was in response to an early-1990 visit to Shreveport by 17 Soviet youths. The Soviet youths and their chaperones had visited a Broadmoor worship service.

The Shreveport group's visit to Sverdlovsk was history-making. Previously the city of 1.5 million in the Ural Mountains of central Russia had been closed to Westerners because of its military industry.

The trip also proved the fulfillment of a "burden," as Mr. Ramsey describes it, to bring the Christian Gospel to Russia that he said he had felt since his days in seminary.

With that in mind, he carried with him some Russian-language Bibles to give to Baptist and Pentecostal Christians he found in Sverdlovsk's unlicensed "house churches."

But while there, Mr. Ramsey was permitted to speak of his faith, with the help of an interpreter, to a gathering at the House of Friendship, a public social hall.

Ms. Istomina was in the audience.

Moved by message

His message so moved the 34-year-old college administrator that the next day she went with him to a gathering of Christian "believers."

(Last week Ms. Istomina told the Reporter that although she had been baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church, it was only in Mr. Ramsey's message "that I really felt Jesus Christ close to me.")

Before Mr. Ramsey left Sverdlovsk, 20 people, including Ms. Istomina and two KGB agents, signed a petition to the city council asking to establish a United Methodist congregation.

He recommended the congregation elect Ms. Istomina its lay leader. They did, to her surprise.

"I didn't feel very much like a leader," she said.

Ms. Istomina has proven her abilities, however.

This February, when Mr. Ramsey returned to Sverdlovsk to visit the newly established congregation—it had become legally recognized Oct. 24, 1990, two weeks after the Soviet Union legalized freedom of religion—he found the membership had grown to more than 600.

In addition, Ms. Istomina's father, Paul Istomin, told Mr. Ramsey that he was ready to profess his own faith and be baptized. (The difference in their surnames is the Russian-language denotation of masculine and feminine gender).

Family is outcast

In becoming publicly acknowledged "believers," Lydia, her father and mother, Raisa, have lost their jobs and incomes, become outcasts among their families and former friends and cut their ties to the Communist Party.

Mr. Istomin has repudiated his Communist Party work of the past half-century, during which time he served as a propagandist and educator.

"I feel a great guilt for what I did to our children," he told a recent gathering at Broadmoor UMC, with his daughter acting as his interpreter.

The Sverdlovsk congregation also suffers the oppression of being unable to worship together as a group.

"We are allowed to use public buildings for meetings but not for worship," Ms. Istomina told the Reporter.

"We must give our program to a government official to be approved. We are allowed one prayer at the beginning and one prayer at the end and we may have discussions but not worship."

To relieve those restrictions based on use of public buildings, Mr. Ramsey went to the Sverdlovsk city council in February with a proposal for a site on which to build a sanctuary and an affiliated school.

He asked for 10 acres of park land in the heart of Sverdlovsk, within walking distance of apartment houses, schools and markets.

Not only did the council deed the 10 acres to the congregation, it agreed to Mr. Ramsey's request to rename the site "Methodist Park."

Now Mr. Ramsey and Broadmoor UMC are spearheading a $1 million building campaign for the Sverdlovsk congregation.

Communicate by facsimile

Meanwhile, Mr. Ramsey is serving as Ms. Istomina's supervisor as she ministers to their Sverdlovsk flock. They communicate weekly by facsimile messages, via a machine donated to the Sverdlovsk congregation by the Broadmoor congregation.

The Louisianans also send the Russians videotapes of Broadmoor worship services.

"The first time we received the videotapes, we started watching them at 11 a.m. and we didn't stop until 3 o'clock the next morning," Ms. Istomina said.

This fall Mr. Ramsey will return to Sverdlovsk, accompanied by Bishop and Mrs. William B. Oden (Louisiana Area).

They will meet with Bishop Hans Vaxby (Northern Europe Area), under whose jurisdiction the Sverdlovsk congregation is included.

Bishop Oden confirmed that he and Bishop Vaxby have agreed to a cooperative arrangement to support the continuing development of the Sverdlovsk congregation.

"I don't know where this will lead, but it's easy to see God's hand in what's happening," Bishop Oden said.

And what does Dwight Ramsey say now of that burden to go to Russia that he said God laid on his heart 24 years ago?

"Things happen in God's time," he told the Reporter. "This is God's time."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

SHREVEPORT, La.—Lydia Istomina, lay leader of the United Methodist congregation in Sverdlovsk, Russia, presents a vase and a candle holder to the Rev. Dwight Ramsey in gratitude for his help in starting her congregation. Mr. Ramsey and Ms. Istomina have led the establishment of the first United Methodist congregation in the Soviet Union.

More efforts are planned

Reporter Staff Special

SHREVEPORT, La.—The new United Methodist congregation in Sverdlovsk, Russia, is only the first of what are hoped to be many efforts to extend the denomination's outreach into the Soviet Union.

The Rev. Dwight Ramsey, the Shreveport pastor who provided the spark behind the Russian congregation, told the Reporter he had notified Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn, president of the church's General Board of Global Ministries, of the Sverdlovsk congregation's formation.

Bishop Hearn, recovering from recent heart bypass surgery, and the Rev. Randolph Nugent, the board's chief executive, visited the Soviet Union earlier this year and then returned to challenge the mission board to seize the opportunity to launch a major Christian mission there (see UMR, April 26).

In addition to helping start the congregation in Sverdlovsk, United Methodist efforts in the Soviet Union include a possible mission to Moscow and continuing support for the United Methodist congregation in Tallinn, Estonia.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

U.S. churches give generously to new Russian UMs

Reporter Staff Special

SHREVEPORT, La.—Here's a riddle for you:

What do three United Methodist congregations—in Shreveport, in the tiny east Texas town of Karnack about 50 miles from Shreveport and in the northern Russian city of Sverdlovsk—have in common?

Answer: A whole lot more than they used to!

Members of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport have been a sustaining force in the establishment of the Sverdlovsk congregation.

They've supported the trips of their pastor, the Rev. Dwight Ramsey, to Sverdlovsk.

They've provided videotapes of their worship services and their pastor's sermons. Staff member Cheryl Gillespie has adapted the popular "Disciple" Bible study into simple English for use by the Russians.

The 200 members of Broadmoor's United Methodist Women collected clothing and personal hygiene items for the Sverdlovsk congregation.

And Broadmoor members have fanned the mission fire that their pastor started.

On a recent Sunday night, more than 200 people—including several Southern Baptists and Catholics—came to Broadmoor to see videotapes of the story of the founding of the Sverdlovsk congregation.

The gathering contributed more than $5,000 for the Sverdlovsk church.

The crowd included 13 people from the 100-member Karnack (Texas) United Methodist Church.

They'd already seen the videos, courtesy of former Broadmoor member Cecil Ramey, now retired in Karnack.

Mr. Ramey said the tapes convinced the congregation and its student pastor, Phillip Griffin, that Sverdlovsk is a mission field which needs their help.

So they made a 45-minute drive to Broadmoor to meet the congregation's lay leader, Lydia Istomina.

The Karnack members also brought with them a gift: a check for $2,000 toward the $1 million building fund for the Sverdlovsk sanctuary and religious school.

The contribution represents 9 percent of the Karnack church's annual budget!

Mr. Griffin, the son of United Methodist missionaries to Mexico, said he has sent the Sverdlovsk videotapes to other churches within his Texarkana, Texas district, in hopes of sparking even more help for the Russian congregation.

In addition to the contributions from the Shreveport and Karnack congregations, the Louisiana Annual Conference collected more than $3,800 for the Sverdlovsk United Methodists during its meeting in Shreveport June 3-6.

For Ms. Istomina, the outpouring of generosity from United Methodists in America is overwhelming.

"I was so surprised that people would help us," she told the Reporter. "It's so wonderful for me that I can't ask for anything. Our Methodists in Sverdlovsk will be so surprised and so happy."

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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World Methodist Peace Award Given

LEIPZIG, Germany—German Lutheran laywoman Barbel Bohley receives the World Methodist Peace Award from Bishop Lawi Imathiu (right) and the Rev. Joe Hale. Bishop Imathiu, leader of the Methodist Church in Kenya, is the president of the World Methodist Council and Dr. Hale is its chief executive. Mrs. Bohley, an artist, was honored for her efforts to help political prisoners in East Germany, including auctioning some of her own works to raise funds for them. The award was presented during a special portion of the East German United Methodist Annual Conference session presided over by Bishop Ruediger R. Minor.

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

GROVE LEADS DIALOGUE: United Methodist Bishop **William B. Grove**, Charleston, W.Va., is chairman of a National Council of Churches committee created to consult with a denomination known primarily for its outreach to the gay and lesbian community. The dialogue involves the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, which originally applied for membership in the National Council of Churches in 1981. A vote on that membership was postponed "indefinitely" in 1983, but the NCC governing board agreed to continue discussions. The committee will present a progress report to the NCC general board in November.

William B. Grove

BRISTOL BOOKS SOLD: A group of United Methodist lay and clergy investors—all board members of Good News evangelical caucus in the church—has purchased Bristol Books, the publishing arm of Good News, for an undisclosed amount. **James S. Robb**, will continue as editor in chief of what will be known as Bristol House, LTD. **John Stumbo**, Fort Valley, Ga., will be chairman of the Bristol House board.

NEW DIRECTOR: The Rev. **Homer Noley**, a United Methodist pastor in Independence, Kan., has been named executive director of the denomination's national Native American Center in Oklahoma City. Mr. Noley, a Choctaw originally from Oklahoma, will assume his new duties this month. He had been pastor in Independence since 1985, and earlier directed an International School for Native American Ministries at United Methodist Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo.

HOSPITAL ATTACKED: Security has tightened at the United Methodist Hospital in Chicuque, Mozambique, since a June 3 attack on the facility in Southeast Africa. No one was killed and little damage was done to the hospital, according to the Rev. **Zebediah Marewangepo** of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries' World Division. Some blankets and medicines were stolen. After the incident, military personnel were dispatched to protect the hospital and people at the mission. It is uncertain whether RENAMO, a rebel group, was responsible for the attack. The United Methodist mission station in Cambine has been attacked twice by RENAMO in the past.

GRANTS FOR THE HOMELESS: United Methodist Women raised more than $1 million in its 1990 Call to Prayer and Self-denial offering with the theme, "Hope for the Homeless." This spring, grants were made to 54 U.S. projects and 55 international projects working with the homeless. Internationally, the grants went to projects as diverse as a street ministry in Brazil involving two Portuguese-speaking, and one Korean-speaking, Methodist churches and a home for abandoned older adults, run by the Black Housewives' League in South Africa. Domestically, grants went to provide such ministries as child care for homeless women in Spartanburg, N.C.; rent deposits for families in Los Angeles; and assistance for homeless addicts in Little Rock.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Bishop Roy Short is long on service to UMC

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—His name may be Short, but he has a long and distinguished history of service to the people called Methodist.

Retired United Methodist Bishop Roy H. Short of Nashville, 88, made more history during late-May sessions of the denomination's Louisville (Ky.) and Florida annual (regional) conferences.

For Bishop Short, 1991 marked the 70th anniversary of his ordination as a minister by the Louisville conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, a predecessor denomination of United Methodism, and the 70th year he has attended Louisville conference sessions.

He was bishop of the Louisville Area from 1964 until his retirement in 1972.

"I am the only one"

"I have checked the records of that (Louisville) conference in 1921 in Scottsville, Ky.," he said, "and I am the only one—minister or laity—who attended the conference that year who is still living."

> ***"We can't find another situation quite like this in church history."***
> **—Roy Short**

Still living, still serving, still preaching, Bishop Short delivered a memorial sermon during sessions of the Louisville Annual Conference May 20-24. The service at Settle Memorial United Methodist Church in Owensboro, Ky., honored conference clergy and clergy spouses who have died during the past year.

The following week, Bishop Short became perhaps the first United Methodist bishop in history to ordain a third generation of his family to ministry in the denomination.

He participated in a May 28 service at the Florida Annual Conference in Lakeland during which his grandson, the Rev. Riley Phillips Short Jr., was ordained.

The bishop had performed the same service 29 years ago for his son, Riley Phillips Sr., now pastor of First United Methodist Church in Coral Gables, Fla.

The bishop said he does not know of another bishop in the church who has ordained both a son and a grandson.

Elected at age 45

Elected a bishop in 1948 at the age of 45, Bishop Short was one of the youngest in the church to hold the office. The son he later ordained was still in junior high school at the time.

His grandson will return to Palma Ceia United Methodist Church in Tampa, where he has been associate pastor for the past two years. As bishop in the church's Jacksonville (Fla.) Area, Bishop Short led ground-breaking ceremonies for the church about 40 years ago.

To honor the three generations, First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables has established the Bishop Short Lectureship, designed to bring prominent speakers to the church.

Named for the area's former bishop; for his son, who is now the church's pastor; and for his grandson, who entered the ministry from the church, the lecture series may also represent a unique situation.

Bishop Bishop Short says, "We can't find another situation quite like this in church history."

Bishop Short is also one of fewer than a dozen surviving clergy delegates to the historic 1939 "Uniting Conference," which brought together three branches of Methodism that had split in the 1800s, forming The Methodist Church.

One of two surviving bishops who were among the ministerial delegates to that conference, Bishop Short is 10 years younger than the other, retired Bishop Nolan B. Harmon of Atlanta.

Bishop Roy Short
... ordained grandson

The memorial service at Owensboro ended with the singing of "God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again." United Methodists have learned that, whenever they meet, Bishop Short just may be there.

Frances Meeker of the "Nashville Banner" contributed to this story.

'Pastor Hank' serves Maryland circuit with gusto

By CONNIE ROLAND METZGER

ST. MICHAELS, Md.—Methodism got started in these parts because lay preachers preached the Gospel. And in the old backwater churches where Methodists preached free grace, lay speakers are still at it.

Just four years ago, Henry Charlton decided to join St. Luke's United Methodist Church here because the Lutheran Church in Easton, Md., was "too far away," he said sheepishly.

With a thoroughly Lutheran background ("about 100 generations"), a deep commitment to the church, and high energy, it wasn't long before Hank Charlton was elected lay leader.

Two weeks later he was running the church with four other members while then-pastor Ken Rose spent several weeks recovering from a car accident.

Circuit riding in a truck

Now Mr. Charlton serves as lay pastor to a four-point charge. He gallops his El Camino truck to the legendary Eastern Shore towns where watermen don't easily accept "chicken neckers." So how does he, a native of Baltimore and longtime Wilmington resident, make out?

He loves it. Since December, the retired educator has visited half of the members, gone crabbing at 5 a.m., and visits the nursing home and hospital regularly. It helps that he has ancestors native to the Eastern Shore.

But as local postmaster and pastor-parish relations committee chair Ruth Jones say simply, "He's been a true blessing, I'm telling you."

"Pastor Hank" has come full circle. A seminarian and preacher's assistant during the early '50s, he recently returned to Gettysburg Theological Seminary. He's working on a master of theological studies degree largely because of his experience as a pastor to four rural churches.

'They have faith'

"It's given me a chance to see what I didn't do," he said.

"Those people down there have more religion than anywhere I've ever been in my life," said Mr. Charlton. "There's not a lot of outgoing mission, but they have *faith*. They have a prayer chain that won't quit and lots of things going on."

Although he's only been the flock's shepherd since December, attendance at worship services has tripled.

Ruth Jones said having Mr. Charlton as pastor is "wonderful!"

"He's brought stability to the charge," she said. "He's very well-liked and has really built the congregations up. I haven't heard one negative comment. We're going to hate to lose him—the next pastor will have big shoes to fill."

Mr. Charlton doesn't want to leave. He also doesn't want to "jump through the hoops" of becoming a local pastor. But as a certified lay speaker since 1989, he understands the lay speaker's responsibilities and takes them seriously.

PENINSULA CONFERENCE PHOTO

EASTON, Md.—'Pastor Hank' Charlton converses with one of his parishioners on his vigorous circuit around the four-point charge along Maryland's Eastern Shore which he serves as a lay speaker.

Better management sought

As a result of his lay speaking experience, Mr. Charlton feels the denomination named for "Methodists" could have stronger administration and management.

Echoing a historic complaint—and one that's leveled at a model of ministry proposed to come before the 1992 General Conference—he said that it should be easier for his parishioners to receive Holy Communion once a month without his having to recruit retired pastors to celebrate it.

Six credits shy of a Ph.D. because of his eclectic selection of master's degree courses, Mr. Charlton has two careers and several avocations. In his mid-30s, his doctor warned him to "get a new job or get a new doctor."

He sold his materials-handling business and enrolled in graduate school. He decided to become a teacher and taught elementary math in Wilmington for more than 22 years.

> ***"Those people down there have more religion than anywhere I've ever been in my life."***
> **—Hank Charlton**

In the meantime, he coached a championship swim team, designed swimming pools, built a 35-foot oceangoing sailboat in the backyard ("the look on our neighbor's face was priceless the day the crane lifted it over her house"), and photographed professionally.

He has had two mild heart attacks. "I'm very intense," he explained. His pastor, the Rev. Ray Hopkins, tells him to slow down, but Hank just shrugs his shoulders. "I thoroughly enjoy life."

The Rev. Charlotte Nichols, superintendent of the Easton, Md., district, said Mr. Charlton is doing an "excellent job."

"He has a strong level of commitment to God and The United Methodist Church. He's done the work willingly; he's taken his [lay speaker's certification] vow seriously."

Ms. Metzger is editor of the Peninsula conference edition of the United Methodist Review.

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East African churches grow despite limitations

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

Despite limitations in personnel and funding, United Methodist and Methodist churches in East Africa continue to grow.

Those are the findings of a consultation team from United Methodism's General Board of Global Ministries recently.

In Burundi, for example, The United Methodist Church works hard at being self-supporting and addressing the whole person, said the Rev. Julius Jefferson, a World Division executive.

Projects follow church

The start of a church in an area also means accompanying agricultural, educational and medical projects.

Because of the success of the 35,000-member church, it is "being asked by the government to move into new areas where there are no churches," Mr. Jefferson added.

Historically tied to the World Gospel Mission, the church asked those missionaries to leave the country in 1980 because nationals felt they were placed in subservient roles, Mr. Jefferson said. It became an annual conference within the United Methodist Church in 1984.

During its May trip, the 10-person delegation of board staff and elected directors visited United Methodist Committee on Relief projects in Burundi, including a clinic and hospital, women's center, reforestation project and grinding mills.

The Kayero Agriculture Project is now run by Serge Katimosha, a Burundian trained by U.S. missionary Jeff Lockwood.

No missionaries in Burundi

At present, no missionaries are in Burundi, according to Mr. Jefferson. Instead, the church there is interested in short-term volunteers in health care, teaching and specialized skills like carpentry.

The Methodist Church in Kenya, with more than 100,000 members, is "over-extended" because it is expanding in its own country, as well as overseeing Methodist work in Uganda and Tanzania, he said. The shortage of pastors means each covers five to seven churches.

A "tremendous gap between the vision and the resources" exists, he explained.

In Uganda, Ginena Dulley Wills, UMCOR program coordinator, found "a very strong spirit within the church," but many practical needs, including buildings for worship for the more than 1,000 members.

The church there also is seeking evangelist-training classes.

Ms. Wills said she is concerned by the lack of clean water and adequate medical care, particularly for children.

CENTRAL ILLINOIS CONFERENCE PHOTO

Dave teaches how to be a disciple

ROCK ISLAND, Ill.—"Disciple Dave" and fulltime local pastor Robert Jumonville of Reynolds United Methodist Church get to know Nathan and Christine Harroun during the children's message. "The children needed something different to capture their attention," Mr. Jumonville said of Dave's beginnings three years ago. Together the pastor and Dave explore "themes of practical devotional life—prayer and Bible reading, experiences the kids have, and Christ's forgiveness." Although Dave is sometimes rowdy and precocious, his spiritual father says Dave's goal in life is to "become a missionary to the Muppets."

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

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This week's column is written by Mr. Boyd Baun, Conference President of the United Methodist Men. Mr. Baun is a retired sales manager and a member of University William B. Reily Memorial United Methodist Church.

**SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION
QUADRENNIAL CONGRESS
FOR UNITED METHODIST MEN
Centenary College June 28-30, 1991**

Bishop William B. Oden and the Louisiana Conference United Methodist Men are hosting the U.M.M. Quadrennial Congress, at Centenary College June 28-30, with men attending from the 17 Conferences of the South Central Jurisdiction. The theme of the Congress is "United Methodist Men — Partners in the Church."

Bishop Richard Wilkie and Dr. Zan Holmes are among the many inspiring speakers and musicians who will guide the Congress in the revitalizing of "Evangelism, Missional and Spiritual Life" and will seek to send U.M.M. forth as faithful disciples.

Those attending the Congress will form friendships that will stand the test of time. These friendships are not a one-way street; they are opportunities for U.M.M. to learn from each other.

Our goal is for all U.M.M. to leave Centenary College in "one Spirit" and become "doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22).

Boyd E. Baun

Louisiana United Methodists Asked to Help Build New Russian Methodist Church

Like the Biblical heroine whose name she bears, Lydia Istomina of Sverdlovsk, Russia, opened her heart to the gospel of Jesus Christ and a new church was born. She and her father Paul visited this year's Annual Conference to tell their remarkable story and to ask for help for a new church building for the 600 people interested in United Methodism in their hometown. It will be the first United Methodist Church built in Russia since the 1917 Russian Revolution and the first Protestant Church established in this community of 1.5 million people.

The Istomina's dream for a new church was made possible by the vision of the Reverend Dwight Ramsey, pastor of Shreveport's Broadmoor United Methodist Church. For 23 years, Mr. Ramsey felt a call to minister in Russia. Last summer, on a cultural exchange trip, he preached at an underground Baptist Church service in Sverdlovsk attended by Mrs. Istomina. Touched by United Methodism's message of the "warmed heart," she added two new jobs in addition to her full-time position as a top university administrator in order to pay for the increased phone calls, letters, and other resources needed to start a United Methodist Church. (She was later fired from these two jobs because of her religious faith.)

In the spring of this year, Mrs. Istomina and Mr. Ramsey approached the Sverdlovsk City Council for permission to establish a worship and cultural center for religion there. In February, the congregation was given permission to use the Communist Propaganda Building until a church is built. The congregation began meeting in April with Lydia Istomina serving as lay leader. Since church members are not allowed to hold worship services in the state-owned building, they join together weekly in prayer and devotion, using videotapes of Mr. Ramsey's sermons for spiritual nurture.

Although Lydia Istomina had been a secret life-long Christian, her father had not. Dr. Paul Istomina was a former propagandist for the Communist Party whose atheism melted under his daughter's prayers and Mr. Ramsey's preaching. He was baptized by Mr. Ramsey in February and shortly afterward surrendered his Communist Party membership. Dr. Istomina plans to work with his daughter to set up a private school for children ages 6-15 that would offer both classical education and religion courses.

Mr. Ramsey's goal for the construction of Sverdlovsk's United Methodist Church is filled with faith and determination. Citing his belief that this "is one of the greatest opportunities open to the Christian Church today," Mr. Ramsey points out that the city has already donated 10 acres of land for the United Methodist Center after religion was legalized last fall and that his own church, Broadmoor, has enthusiastically adopted the Sverdlovsk as its sister congregation and collected over $4000 after Mrs. Istomina spoke to them. Participants in Louisiana's Annual Conference also gave $3800 to the cause. The ultimate goal, says Mr. Ramsey, is to raise one million dollars to establish the Methodist church building on Soviet soil. Underlying his mission, Mr. Ramsey continues, is the hope "that we'll be able to help them and that they will be able to help us. Anyone who has maintained strong religious faith after surviving 70 years of persecution certainly has something to say to [us]," he believes. He also says that anyone interested in more information or in helping may contact him at Broadmoor, 3715 Youree Drive, Shreveport, LA 71105 or the Conference Office at 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (504) 346-1646.

Shown pictured are Dr. Paul Istomina, Mrs. Lydia Istomina and the Rev. Dwight Ramsey during Annual Conference.

Conference Center Plans Continue

Members of the Conference Center Board of Trustees are moving rapidly ahead with the plans for Louisiana United Methodism's new Conference Center. During a meeting held during Annual Conference in Shreveport, Architect Thilo Steinschulte of the firm of Barron, Heinberg and Brocato, was authorized to develop a master plan for construction. His proposal will be submitted for approval at the 1992 Annual Conference.

The Board also approved the following tentative timetable for events dealing with the activities of the Conference Center:

Summer of 1991
Bushhogging on building and road sites.

August 31, 1991
Road area plan and design to be completed.

January 1, 1992
Construction of lake to begin.

April 19, 1992
Master plan to be completed.

Annual Conference, June 1992
Master plan to be presented at Annual Conference.
Financial plan to be presented at Annual Conference.

Summer/fall, 1992
Ground breaking for Conference Center.

The Conference Center will be built on a 391-acre tract of land near Alexandria. During the months of August, Board members will visit other conference-center sites in the southeast to gather ideas and information for the future assembly grounds. Suggestions gleaned from surveys sent to United Methodists across the state will also be incorporated into the plans.

Architect Thilo Steinschulte explains the road plans for Louisiana's proposed Conference Center to Dr. Tom Matheny, Chairman of the Conference Center Board of Trustees, Bishop William B. Oden and Dr. Harvey G. Williamson, Project Coordinator.

A Day of Exploration

VISION 2000 Follow-Up: Call to Ministry

A Day of Exploration was held on Saturday, June 1, at First United Methodist Church, Alexandria, for the purpose of bringing together those who had responded to the call to ministry during the VISION 2000 Louisiana Gathering in Baton Rouge. Ninety-one persons attended. Bishop William B. Oden opened the session with an overview and witness to his own call to ministry followed by other leaders. Each of these discussed their particular area of ministry as well as their personal callings.

Both morning and afternoon sessions afforded periods of questions and answers and sharing within various group settings. The session concluded with a worship service led by the Reverend Kathy Dauphin, liturgist; and three inspiring speakers: the Reverend Jerry Hilburn, the Reverend Isiah Lee and the Reverend Loretta Lampkin who spoke of their call to the ministry and offered a vital challenge to those present.

The Day of Exploration was deemed such a success that this may well be an annual event. Both ministers and laity are urged to be sensitive to and encourage those who have and are being called to ministry. The future leadership of our church depends upon this nurturing spirit.

July Conference Calendar

8-11 Pastors' School, Centenary College
8-12 JYMO, Mount Sequoyah
12 United Methodist Men's 1992 Retreat Planning Group
14-15 United Methodist Women Committee Meetings (Program, Finance, School and Executive), Centenary College
15-22 World Federation of Methodist Women, Singapore
16-17 United Methodist Women Conference Committees: Program, Finance, School of Christian Mission, and Executive, Centenary College
18-21 United Methodist Women School of Christian Mission, Centenary College
22-23 World Methodist Bishops' Meeting, Singapore
24-31 World Methodist Conference, Singapore
27-28 South Central Jurisdiction Cluster II of "Each Local Woman" event, Centenary College
29-Aug. 3 Planned Giving School, Colorado Springs

Bishop Oden is shown speaking to participants during the Day of Exploration held at First UMC in Alexandria.

Louisiana Delegates Elected to Church-Wide Conferences

Local church delegates to the Louisiana Annual Conference had extra duties this year. Among the reports, singing, speeches and worship, came the oft-repeated announcement for ballot selection, collection and counting. It was to elect this quadrennial's delegates to the 1992 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

Louisiana sends six clergy and six lay delegates to General Conference and eight clergy and eight lay delegates to Jurisdictional Conference. The number of delegates allowed is based on the number of clergypeople and church members in the Conference. There are also eight reserve delegates (four clergy, four lay) that are elected to Jurisdictional Conference. Mr. Paul White, lay leader of the Conference and first lay delegate elected, leads the delegation. (A clergyperson will lead the delegation voted on during the next quadrennial.)

The delegates that were elected this year symbolize the diversity of the Louisiana church. They come from all parts of Louisiana, small towns and large cities, are male and female and represent many ethnic groups. Lay occupations include politics, teaching, sales jobs, religious work, real estate, business, law and homemaking. Clergy delegates pastor large churches and small churches, labor on the Cabinet, or head special ministries. One clergy delegate is president of a United Methodist seminary.

Veteran delegates report that each Conference's delegation to General Conference begins its preparations for the Louisville meeting in a few months. Each is asked to serve on different task forces to study the issues and resolutions that come before the church-wide assembly May 5-15, 1992. Additionally, the Louisiana delegation as a whole meets to prepare for any specific agenda that Louisiana may want represented.

General Conference delegates also attend Jurisdictional Conference. The primary purpose of this Conference is the election of new Bishops for each Jurisdictional area. The Louisiana delegation, according to one of the clergy delegates, will try to nominate one of Louisiana's ministers for this great honor. Jurisdictional Conference meets in Ft. Worth, July 14-17, 1992. Elected delegates are:

Ministerial Delegates to the General Conference:
Dr. Alfred L. Norris
Dr. J. Philip Woodland
Rev. Carole Cotton-Winn
Dr. L. Ray Branton
Rev. William D. Peeples
Rev. Joe W. McClain

Lay Delegates to the General Conference:
Mr. Paul D. White
Dr. Nancy M. Carruth
Mr. John T. Porter
Mr. Hubert Blanchard
Dr. Anita H. Crump
Mr. Jack Dew

Ministerial Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference:
Rev. James M. Poole
Rev. Christopher H. Andrews
Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell
Dr. Charles B. Simmons
Rev. John M. Lee
Rev. Donald R. Avery
Rev. John M. Winn, Jr.
Rev. R. Larry Stafford

Lay Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference:
Mrs. Carolyn Dove
Mrs. Amy Ward
Mr. Bob Sides
Mr. Matt Kawasaki
Judge Carl E. Stewart, Sr.
Mr. Bob Nash
Mrs. Seola Callahan
Mrs. Dorothy Mae Taylor

Reserve Ministerial Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference:
Rev. Douglas McGuire
Dr. George W. C. Calvin
Rev. Carol Susan Winn
Rev. Marie P. Williams

Reserve Lay Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference:
Mr. Welton Brumfield, Jr.
Mrs. Patricia H. Hogan
Mrs. Vera Packer
Mr. O. Fred Loy

Correction

Last week's column neglected to include that Dr. Charles B. Simmons currently serves as Chairperson of the Conference Council on Ministries. We regret this error.

Important Notice

The Louisiana Annual Conference has designated Sunday, June 30, 1991, as Conference Disaster Relief Sunday. On this day, churches throughout the Conference are encouraged to contribute toward assistance provided by the local church to those affected by natural disasters.

Checks should be payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference. Please include an Advance Special Sheet and report it on line 4400. Send to 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Of Special Interest on the Inside Pages

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Editorial

Hopeful signs for NCC

The 1980s were tough for the National Council of Churches.

A controversial 1983 "60 Minutes" TV show raised troubling questions about its theology, fiscal management and political involvements. That led to an organizational overhaul and continuing upheaval throughout the decade, and culminating in another structural overhaul in 1990.

Recent remarks by the NCC's new chief executive offer hope that the ecumenical agency has turned a corner.

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell made these observations during an interview with the Reporter (see related articles in this issue):

✓ ***"The theological task for our time is teaching people about unity."***

Comment: Jesus' prayer that "they may be one" (John 17:23) has been the stated mandate of the NCC since its inception. However, well-intended but often imbalanced efforts to be prophetic gained the NCC more a reputation for sowing seeds of discord than concord.

By re-focusing its efforts, the NCC stands a chance of reversing that image and becoming a body that truly promotes unity among Christians.

✓ ***"The only way on ecumenical leader gains any authority is by being a diplomat—a caring person who models the spirit in which the work needs to be done."***

Comment: In a time of pervasive institutional distrust, being an "official" is not an automatic asset, particularly when the credibility and viability of one's institution is under constant challenge.

Ms. Campbell's remarks project a refreshing spirit of humility, including a willingness to be a listener as well as a doer—essential qualities for creating a receptive climate for united efforts.

✓ ***"One of the main problems with national church leaders is they lose touch with the realities of daily life."***

Comment: Ivory towers—structures that shield leaders from the needs and concerns of ordinary people—thwart the model of servant leadership that Ms. Campbell's words reflect. In the view of many critics, the NCC became an ivory tower.

Ms. Campbell shows a healthy awareness that the NCC dare not ignore such perceptions or the realities that feed them. Otherwise, its efforts rightly will be dismissed as something less than a witness to the Gospel.

✓ ***There is "not a big difference" between the NCC and President Bush. "I believe he functions out of who he is as a Christian; that informs all of his decisions as president."***

Comment: What a contrast with widespread perceptions based on NCC-approved resolutions that NCC leaders automatically "demonize" U.S. political leaders. Such perceptions have fostered a grating suspicion: that NCC leaders are incapable of recognizing anything good in the American political and economic systems.

Acknowledgment by the NCC's top executive that the President of the U.S. is one who tries to live out of his Christian faith offers a hope worth praying for: The emergence of less confrontation and more fruitful dialogue and cooperation between Christian leaders and elected public servants.

The National Council of Church's new logo suggests a boat with the cross of Christ as its mast, the world, the waters of baptism and the winds of the Holy Spirit. Recent remarks by the NCC's new chief executive suggest that, after a difficult decade, the ecumenical body has turned a corner.

Here I Stand

Let's get history on abortion stance straight

By STEVEN PAUL WISSLER

"Our United Methodist Church has for many years been remarkably consistent on abortion."

"The church has demonstrated great caution and care on the issue."

Comments like these from pastors, church agency leaders and even some bishops show that a lot of homework still needs to be done about how the United Methodist Church has handled the abortion problem.

We've been sloppy

That's because a look at the record shows we have been sloppy. Even "pro-choice" advocate Benjamin Garrison admitted the resolution on legalizing abortion was a rush job when the issue first surfaced at the 1970 General Conference.

"I would not die for the clarity for the statement before us," he said on the floor. "I further suggest that with the population explosion upon us we cannot afford to wait to issue a statement on this question until 1972. Even if it is a bad statement, I suggest that it is our duty to make such a statement even if it is not the statement with which we wish to live for the rest of our lives" Professor Albert Outler later revealed the circumstances surrounding the statement's passage:

"The triumph was achieved within the span of less than 20 minutes on a dismal Thursday afternoon when the General Conference was already disintegrating.

We were under strict cloture and the spirit of mature deliberation had long since fled. If it was a defeat,—and many of us still sincerely believe that the chair was mistaken on this point—it was a paper-thin margin—and no one had the wit or the will to call for a count-vote or ballot."

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Steven Paul Wissler, director of the Task-force of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality, lives in Ephrata, Pa.

An 'overwhelming majority'?

Later, of course, board officials would claim that "this stand was approved by an overwhelming majority of the delegates" ("Christian Advocate" Sept. 16, 1971, page 7).

Unfortunately, passage of the 1972 Discipline statement was just as sloppy. The paragraph that Prof. Paul Ramsey's Study Commission approved was sent to the Executive Committee of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, which radically changed it.

Dr. Ramsey complained to his bishop about the wording: "I am not at all sure that I now can agree that the statement is 'in continuity with past Christian teaching.' "

If there is still a question about our denomination's short-sighted abortion position, just talk to 1988 General Conference delegate, Dr. Ray Goens, a Houston physician.

In 1972, he favored legalized abortion: "I wanted to put the criminal abortionist out of business." But in today's more free-wheeling moral climate, he said, "We as a church need to say we oppose abortion as birth control."

Dr. Goens told me that he understands the the church's current language against birth-control abortions pertains to those done for non-medical reasons, including reasons of convenience, timing, family size, etc.

"Back in 1972, there is no way I thought we'd ever see over a million abortions a year. Now abortions are being done for reasons far from what we meant back then."

Inflicting death is routinely used as a "solution" to pregnancy. Fortunately, despite its rocky start, General Conference is coming around on the need to minimize the epidemic of abortions done for birth control reasons—over 90 percent of all abortions.

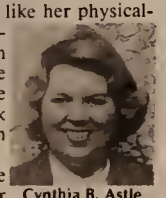
So for heaven's sake, let's revive our ministries to unwed mothers. Let's preach that adoption is good, and those getting an abortion need forgiveness and changed life.

And let's start doing our homework on how the church reached its current stance.

Faithfully yours

Contrasts with my Russian sister-in-faith awe me

Perhaps her biblical namesake didn't look much like her physically. After all, people from northern Russia and people from the Middle East don't look much alike even today.



Cynthia B. Astle

But when she spoke to me of her belief, I found a glow of faith that surely must be the spiritual link between the long-ago biblical Lydia and Lydia Istomina of Sverdlovsk, Russia.

Ms. Istomina visited the United States recently to meet her American United Methodist "cousins" and to gain training to lead the first United Methodist congregation in Russia (see UMR, June 21).

When I met her in Shreveport, La., I couldn't help but marvel at the differences between her experience as a laywoman in the Soviet Union and mine as a laywoman in the United States.

Lydia told me that she came to her position of church leadership reluctantly.

"I was baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church, but there are no women leaders in that church," said the vibrant blonde with vivid blue eyes. "I didn't think I could be a leader."

But then Lydia found examples of witnesses in the Bible and patterned herself after their models. In so doing, she has led the growth of her Sverdlovsk congregation from 20 to 600 people in less than a year.

"I was surprised that people trust me and believe me," she said.

Our interview quite nearly left me open-mouthed in awe as I compared Lydia's life in the faith with my own.

My Christian upbringing centered on learning how to articulate the attributes of faith and character, and how to live a life of love and service.

My church and Sunday school attendance, mission projects, and spiritual retreats have been supported by my family, friends and mentors in the faith. I've been allowed to believe and to act on those beliefs amid the tolerance of a society founded on freedom of religion.

In contrast, Lydia has had only her Bible and the encouragement—from half a world away—of the Rev. Dwight Ramsey, the Louisiana pastor whose message brought Lydia to Christ and who helped found the Sverdlovsk congregation.

Lydia practices her faith in a society that won't even let her congregation worship together in the public building where they meet.

Because of my faith, I accepted a position at the Reporter. Because of her faith, Lydia lost her position as a college administrator.

Even as I wondered at the experiences that separate us, Lydia's next words reminded me of the bond that unites us.

"When I was Russian Orthodox, I couldn't imagine Jesus Christ being so realistic," she told me.

"But now, I have seen Him [in a vision]. At first, when I saw Him, I was so frightened because I thought it was my last day.

"Now I understand it's just my first day."

Thanks to my new-found sister in faith from the Soviet Union, I'm having a "first day" all over again.

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

Ms. Astle is Associate Editor of the Reporter

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy." (RSV).

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : ___

(Last week's answer: John 12:26)

Readings for week of July 1

Monday: Psalms 24
Tuesday: Psalms 25
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 6:1-15
Thursday: Mark 5:21-34
Friday: Mark 5:35-43
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 8:16-24

Letters to the Editor

We need to take advantage of doors opening for Christ

In the short span of three years, Eastern Europe has largely cast off its yoke of Communist slavery, the Baltic States are demanding independence, Germany has been reunited, and the Iraq invasion of Kuwait has been repulsed.

What more will be needed to convince the left-leaning bureaucracy of the United Methodist Church that socialism has failed and that "peace and justice" alone are not adequate?

Doors are being opened throughout the world for Christians to move in with the message of the risen Christ.

With the upcoming 1992 General Conference, we have the opportunity to correct any policy deficiencies that have permitted our church leadership to be diverted from the "Great Commission" into placing excessive dependence on political action.

Charles Shuman
Sullivan, Illinois

Editorial was effective

Your June 7 "Games-as-God" editorial was needed and effective. I offer a supportive illustration and suggest a correction.

Illustration: Several years ago the Super Bowl was being played in Miami. The day before, players on both teams, reporters and fans were keyed-up, on edge, restless. One player was spotted by reporters relaxing on the beach.

"Say," they asked, "Aren't you nervous?" "Why? Should I be?" "Of course, how can you be so calm when tomorrow is the ULTIMATE game!" Before he rolled over on the sand he said, "How come it's so ultimate if they play it again next year."

Correction: The "games" are a religion, not a god; a religion which worships, whose god is the human body in its most virile, physically attractive, competitive, win-at-any-price form.

Sports (so-called) comprise one denomination of the American uncivil religion: the cult of youth, beauty, sex and immortality. Other denominations and sects are formed around TV-movie sex and violence, the toys we give our children (Barbee and war toys), the typical funeral uncontrolled by pastor, priest or rabbi.

You know others which share the creedal faith, "We will be young and sexy, forever."

Morton King
Georgetown, Texas

'Knights' exalted

I'm responding to the May 31 letter from June E. Roth-Barneson suggesting knighthood for those who mend the destruction of war. Wonderful idea!

And there are such knights! These modern-day "knights in shining armor"and "damsels" helping the distressed are the staff of the St. John's Ophtalmic Hospital in Jerusalem.

The present hospital has served "our lords the sick and poor" since the 1880s. The first hospital, however, was built in the 12th century by the Knights of St. John of the Hospital. The "hospitallers" came to the Holy Land to conquer and subdue Moslems.

Now they come to help and heal any who need them in the war-zone the Holy Land has become.

Friends pray, send money, and sometimes seem too few. I'm glad to be one. Will I be granted a "Ladyship?" No, but those who are deserve the recognition and it does boost team spirit.

Anyone interested may contact The American Society of the Order of St. John, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, New York, 10025. To any and all please pray for the hospital and those it serves.

Laura Diviney
Newton, Massachusetts

My God is nice

"Is your God too nice?" (see UMR editorial, May 24).

Thank God, my God is a nice God—a God of compassion and love in the person of Jesus Christ. We must continue to follow his example as presented in the gospels.

Gloom and doom, fear and condemnation will not save this world. A helping hand and love in our heart can. You can never be too nice!

Vicki Jo Brozovic
Benbrook, Texas

Give credit when due

There is much food for thought in William E. Salmon's May 17 article about copying a sermon idea.

How can one glorify God and not be honest? My personal experience with some who have indulged in plagiarism has been their desire to glorify themselves, not God.

Only a split second is needed to give credit where credit is due.

Bernice Thompson
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Obey the law

William Salmon ignores the law of the land when he writes, "if something is written for use in the church, then for God's sake, give it away!" (see UMR, May 17).

This is an all-too-common interpretation and motive for using copyrighted material and is wrong.

If it has a copyright, you may not legally copy or alter it in any way known or to be invented. This includes changing or writing new words to a copyrighted tune.

Judith A. Currie
Needham, Massachusetts

What others are saying

"There is material for a doctrine of predestination in the Bible, but what it says is that in God's eternal plan, God wills that all people shall be saved and come to the knowledge of God. . . , We are predestined to be 'children of God.' And every one of us is called by God to answer for responsibility with our lives, called to respond to the fullness of our lives, our thought, our love."

—United Methodist Bishop Ben Oliphint (Houston Area)

* * *

"[Regarding church studies of human sexuality] we need, in addition to a sense of humor, large injections of humility and compassion. Who among us has not at least lusted after someone, sinfully, at one time or another, and therefore stands under the searching judgment and mercy of Christ? For goodness' sake, Jesus was much more concerned about how Mammon and greed distort the human personality and damn the sinner (remember Ananias and Sapphira) than He was about sex."

—The Rev. O. Benjamin Sparks, Presbyterian pastor, Richmond, Va.

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Faith watch

NEW ISRAELI MODE SOUGHT: The Rev. **Joe Hale**, chief executive of the World Methodist Council, recently asked President **George Bush** to be more demanding of Israel. In a letter to the President, Mr. Hale said he supports Mr. Bush's Middle East peace efforts but is "alarmed that Israel is undercutting you at every turn by deflecting the creative initiatives you have advanced." He asked the President to treat Israel like any other country receiving U.S. aid or loans.

Joe Hale

LITTLE CHANGE: The repeal of race laws has not changed life for Black South Africans, according to a United Methodist clergywoman visiting the country. "It continues to be a very unequal society," the Rev. **Linda Thomas** of the denomination's New York Annual Conference told United Methodist News Service in a telephone call from Capetown. Ms. Thomas, who is on faculty at United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver, recently became a visiting scholar at the University of Capetown. She is completing research there about religion's influence on the political behavior of Black South Africans for her doctoral dissertation.

CHINA POLICY QUESTIONED: A number of human rights corrections should be required of China before the U.S. grants that nation "most favored-nation status," according to the Rev. **Thom White Wolf Fassett**, head of United Methodism's social action agency. Mr. Fassett in a letter to U.S. Rep. **Nancy Pelosi** (D-Calif.) said that increased trade with China is desirable but not at the expense of "our ignoring China's human-rights problems."

BAPTIST AGENCY FIGHTS SUIT: A Virginia Supreme Court ruling is expected soon on an appeal of a $1.56 million judgment against the Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board based in Richmond, Va. The judgment was awarded by a Richmond court last July to the children of a former missionary couple after testimony that the children were sexually abused by their father, **G. Thomas Wade Jr.** The suit was won on the argument that church officials knew of the abuse but failed to inform the man's wife, **Diana Sue Wade**, so she could halt the abuse. Now divorced from Mr. Wade, Ms. Wade last November filed a similar damage suit on her own behalf.

402 PROFESS FAITH: Professions of faith by 402 people and 144 requests for information about a new church were reported after an outreach effort in Atlanta prior to the annual meeting there of the Southern Baptist Convention recently. Volunteers reported that they went door-to-door to 9,658 Atlanta-area homes and shared the gospel 1,112 times. A religious opinion survey was used as a springboard to sharing the gospel.

MOVE IS COSTING LESS: Costs of moving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) offices from New York and Atlanta to Louisville, Ky., beginning in 1988, are turning out to be about $1 million below the projected $32.7 million. **Robert M. Gwaltney**, coordinator of finance and budgets for the denomination, credited the savings to careful planning by church staff and contributions of goods, services and facilities by Louisville and corporations.

DOGS MAUL BAPTIST LEADER: **John Thomason**, head of the Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention, last week was attacked by two pit bull dogs as he jogged near his parents' home in Columbus, Ga. He said one dog "went straight for my Achilles' tendon on my right foot, and the other one went for my left hand and forearm." The dogs knocked him down and tried to drag him into some nearby woods. A Georgia Power Co. employee saw him and radioed for help. The Rev. **Chan Garrett**, regional director for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, said Mr. Thomason was going home to Casper, Wyo., to recuperate.

Compiled from news and staff reports

'Frightening' visit to Iraq recounted

Insights given into American religious leaders' spiritual struggles during trip

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

Related Editorial on Page 2

A group of American church leaders were "terribly frightened" as they visited Iraq last Christmas, shortly before the Persian Gulf war began.

This glimpse into the spiritual struggle of religious leaders during a fact-finding trip was provided recently by the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, new chief executive of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A.

At the time of the trip, Ms. Campbell was head of the American office of the World Council of Churches.

Meeting recently with the Reporter's editorial staff, she described an intense night of tearful prayers, personal sharings and individual and group soul-searching by members of the delegation after they met with Iraqi officials in Baghdad.

Opponents 'demonized'

Ms. Campbell said that those on the trip were aware of the occasional American penchant to "demonize people who don't agree with us" and thought that might be the case regarding Iraqi leadership.

However, Ms. Campbell said, when they met with officials such as the "minister for peace and justice" and were told how many people those officials planned to kill and heard gory descriptions of ways they would be brutalized, "we were horrified!"

She said that when the group gathered back in its hotel "we agreed with President Bush that these leaders were nasty, nasty people."

The ecumenical executive said that "the Iraqi people—other than their leaders—were wonderful. But the people were afraid of war and perhaps even more afraid of their own government."

After the Christmas-visit group had returned from Baghdad to their hotel in Jordan, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmund Browning, head of the church in which President and Mrs. Bush hold membership, waited for word whether the bishop would be granted audience with Mr. Bush.

At one point, as the group discussed their own moral dilemma, Bishop Browning wept in agitated frustration about the situation. He was not alone, Ms. Campbell said.

Several wept in frustration

The Episcopalian, who was granted a brief audience later with Mr. Bush, was joined in his bitter tears by others, including United Methodist Bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area), as the group wrestled with their own opposition to war while realizing that the Iraqi government exemplified evil and was a terrible threat, Ms. Campbell said.

"We only disagreed with President Bush about the need for going to war when he thought it was necessary," she said.

"We were in complete agreement with him on the need for doing something to try to control the Iraqi leadership. We just hoped it would be sanctions for a lot longer, to give more time for them to take effect."

Now, since the war, Ms. Campbell sees the NCC as an ideal vehicle for working with the president to try to bring about a "New World Order."

New order is faith-based

Ms. Campbell stressed that from her perspective, the new world order is a faith-based concept, not a political concept. She pointed to Isaiah 65:17-25 as a scriptural blueprint for it.

She said that the NCC version of a new world order will differ somewhat from the president's view "in areas such as care for the poor and who participates in determining and shaping the new world order." However, she said there is "not a big difference" between the "new world" concepts of the NCC and President Bush.

Joan Campbell
. . . frightened in Iraq

At heart, she said, the NCC view and the president's view will be similar because "he functions out of who he is as a Christian. I sincerely believe that informs all of his decisions as president."

Chief theological task: 'Teaching people about unity'

By DON DONATO
Associate Editor

"The theological task for our time is teaching people about unity," says the new chief executive of the National Council of Churches.

More than that, the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell sees unity as an important gift in God's creation.

In her second month in the top job of the 32-denomination ecumenical body, Ms. Campbell moved there from being the head of the World Council of Churches office in the U.S. She visited the Reporter's offices during a recent trip to Dallas.

The National Council is ideally suited for fostering unity from a theological perspective, Ms. Campbell said.

One way to do that, she indicated, is to share with one denomination, church or faith group what another is doing well.

That meshes with her concept of her own role because "the only way an ecumenical leader gains any authority is by being a diplomat—a caring person who models the spirit in which the work needs to be done," she said.

She stressed that the sharing of successful ministries extends even beyond the broad group of NCC-member denominations and yet has its foundation "in the congregation as the base."

Further, "I've been extremely pleased" by evidences of the broader acceptance of the perceived leadership role of the council, she said, citing a recent $75,000 grant to begin development of a "New World Order."

That grant is special, she said, because it came from the Unitarian Church, which is not a member of the National Council.

Regarding agencies of several denominations, including United Methodist, moving from or considering moving from New York, Ms. Campbell said she sees value in a New York base because "there's no way you can live in New York and not be aware of the problems of the people around you."

"I've often thought one of the main problems with national church leaders is they lose touch with the realities of daily life," Ms. Campbell said.

"We might all benefit from the black church model—black leaders have a church of which they are pastor even as they serve national boards or offices. That keeps them in touch with the people."

The NCC chief said one main reason for her extensive travel schedule is simply to allow her to stay in touch with the people.

Thus she hopes to be the kind of ecumenical leader whose authority comes from her modeling of "the spirit in which the work of the church in the world needs to be done."

And she hopes that personal modeling will encourage local congregations to accept that model as their own, reflecting it into the world.

Philippines volcano hits UMC far, wide

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

"Tremendous devastation" continues in the Philippines, where some 50,000 United Methodists felt the aftermath of Mount Pinatubo's volcanic eruption this month.

In a telephone interview with the Reporter, Bishop Emerito P. Nacpil (Manila Area) said, "The devastation from the volcano was more damaging than last year's earthquake, because the destruction covered such a large area."

He said at least half of the 100,000 United Methodists in his annual conference were affected. Some were without adequate food and water, while others lost homes and agricultural crops.

The 4,800-foot Mount Pinatubo, dormant for 611 years, began eruptions on June 9. A more violent eruption occurred on June 12. During that time, 80 United Methodist churches in the Manila Annual Conference collapsed.

An added factor was typhoon Yunya, causing mud slides that hit an unknown number of United Methodist churches.

Thirty United Methodist churches in the conference's Western Luzon mission district were destroyed by volcanic ash. These small churches had an outreach ministry with the Aetas tribe in the mountains.

"Many parsonages and schools were destroyed and damaged," said Bishop Nacpil. "The mission district is wiped out. The tribal people will not be able to return to their homeland."

The bishop described how volcanic ash has immobilized entire communities. He said the ash fallout—similar to soot—became so heavy on the houses that the roofs collapsed.

One pastor reported to the bishop that the Sapang Bato UMC behind Clark Air Base was swept way by a mudslide near Mount Pinatubo. The U.S. air base is about 10 miles southeast of the volcano.

As people sought refuge in churches and sports stadiums used as evacuation centers, local United Methodist pastors could account for the whereabouts of some 3,000 United Methodist families, said the bishop.

Churches serving as shelters include Apalit UMC, assisting 40 families; Johannah UMC, with 300 persons, and Central UMC in San Fernando, with 20 persons.

Bishop Nacpil said relief has been given by the Philippines Council of Churches and the Red Cross, together with the Philippine government Department of National Welfare.

Anne Unander, World Division executive for the church's General Board of Global Ministries, said Bishop Nacpil has appealed for ready-to-eat food, clothing, and medicine. He also requested assistance for people to rebuild homes, restart their livelihoods and to rebuild United Methodist churches.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief sent a grant of $20,000 on June 18.

Financial gifts for future relief efforts can be made in care of Advance No. 240225-1. Specify that the donation is for victims of Mount Pinatubo.

Presbyterian action gets mixed reviews

Religious News Service

Leaders of two United Methodist groups expressed differing views last week about the recent overwhelming rejection by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of a controversial report on human sexuality.

The Presbyterian report, rejected by a vote of 534-31, swept aside traditional ethical standards restricting sexual relations to marriage between a man and a woman and called for "justice-love" to become the norm for measuring human relationships.

Presbyterians also reaffirmed a 13-year-old ban on ordaining homosexuals to the ministry.

The Rev. James Heidinger, executive director of the Good News evangelical fellowship, said, "United Methodists are indebted to them for the way they handled this issue.

"The radical nature of the task force's recommendations, which frankly sounded more like Dr. Ruth than Luther, Calvin and Wesley, only serves to illustrate how far some of the hierarchy of the mainline churches and their study committees are from the grassroots of the church. We believe that's also the case in the United Methodist Church."

But the Rev. George McClain, executive director of the Methodist Federation for Social Action, believes that the widespread interest in the Presbyterian action, despite its negative consequences for homosexuals, is a sign that liberals are gathering steam.

The "electricity" surrounding the Presbyterian report is a sign of hope for those advocating full rights for homosexuals in the church, said Mr. McClain, who lives in Staten Island, N.Y.

Leaders of similar groups within the Episcopal Church also showed interest in the Presbyterian action.

Bishop William Frey, dean of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pa., and a traditionalist leader in the Episcopal Church, said he welcomed the Presbyterian action and expected it to bolster conservatives in the Episcopal Church.

Episcopal leaders will consider a recommendation in Phoenix next month that decisions on ordination of practicing homosexuals be left to the discretion of local bishops. Conservatives will seek to ban their ordination.

Chaplain's letters tell heartrending side of Desert Storm

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

While flags are still waving over homecoming parades for men and women of Operation Desert Storm, a United Methodist chaplain's heartrending letters from the war zone are reminding people that war, on any scale, is no game.

The writer is the Rev. Clif Christopher, pastor of First United Methodist Church in West Memphis, Ark. He was called to active duty and attached to a MASH—Mobile Army Surgical Hospital—unit in the Middle East.

The two letters, published in the "Arkansas United Methodist," were written at the request of the newspaper's editor, Jane Dennis.

Many of the soldiers were United Methodist, he wrote. The members of their home congregations were a source of enormous strength to the men and women. But Mr. Christopher expressed dismay at the attitude of some general-church leadership.

The pronouncements against Desert Storm from [some of] our church's higher headquarters hurt and disillusioned our troops. We've all felt that the general church has given much more support to the one UM soldier who has chosen to object [to military service] than to the thousands who chose to serve.

When the ground war started, Mr. Christopher and the MASH unit were 100 miles inside Iraq. They barely had the hospital set up when the first patients started to arrive.

The whirl of the chopper sounds day and night. War has found its casualties. . . .

You see terror in the eyes of many and prayers on the lips of most.

. . . On Day One we saved over 60, but we lost two. We cried over the two.

Mr. Christopher wrote that his most touching experience came from three 19-year-old friends named David, Al and Russ. One was a northerner, one a southerner and one a Hispanic.

At 3 p.m. one day, while the three were investigating Iraqi bunkers, Al stepped on a mine which exploded and tore off his leg.

David, rushing to help his friend, also hit a mine which severely wounded him and Russ. Within 30 minutes they were at the field hospital.

At first the doctors gave Al little hope.

I held his hand as he cried in pain from the mangled stump on his left side. Together we went into surgery.

Mr. Christopher then searched for David. He was severely wounded. He lost both legs and one arm and bled extensively.

David was in trouble. I went into the operating room. Five surgeons were frantically trying to stop the bleeding. Already 20 units of blood had been given. The anesthetist looked at me and shook his head.

I knelt down by the table and began to talk to David. I told him of the love of his friends and family. I told him of the love of God. . . . I finished by saying, "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you. And, David, the Lord give you peace."

The buzzer sounded, the heart line went straight. . . David lay still. The doctors wiped their brows and eyes. Nurses pulled tubes and hugged each other.

Russ and Al lived. Later that night Mr. Christopher visited them to tell them their friend had died.

Tears flowed from tough soldiers' eyes. At 3 p.m. they were three great pals playing soldier. By 9 that evening, they were casualties of war, and the three were now two. Just three boys involved in a dangerous game concocted by adults.

My day in the war ended around midnight. My last prayers were for boys like Russ, Al and David. To all who want to play war games, these boys will tell you it is no game.

Faith connections

WOMEN OF COLOR AWARDS: United Methodist "Women of Color" scholarships have been awarded by the General church's Board of Higher Education and Ministry to six women working on doctoral degrees in religious studies. The program is intended to increase the number of racial and ethnic women who teach theology. Recipients are: **Yar D. Bratcher, Tumani S. Mutasa-Nyajeka, Nam-Soon K. Park, Rosetta E. Ross,** the Rev. **Naomi P. Southard,** and the Rev. **Linda E. Thomas.**

REGISTRAR DIES: **John E. Bevan,** 59, registrar and assistant dean at United Methodism's Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington and formerly registrar and director of graduate admissions at United Methodist-related Drew University in Madison, N.J., died June 16, reportedly of AIDS.

YOUTH MINISTRY EVENT: Albuquerque, N.M., will be the site of "Forum '92," a biennial gathering for United Methodist adults who work with youths. The theme, centered around Native American heritage, is "Dwelling in the Spirit: Drummers, Dancers and Storytellers." For details, write the Rev. **Tom Salsgiver,** General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0840.

MISSION STAFFER MOVES: The Rev. **Sherrie Boyens,** managing editor of "Response" magazine, the official publication for United Methodist Women, has been appointed pastor of First United Methodist Church in Ridgefield Park, N.J. As an executive with the General Board of Global Ministries in New York for nearly 10 years, she also was interim managing editor of "New World Outlook" magazine.

EXECUTIVE NAMED: Associate Dean **Susan Sonneday Vogel** has been appointed executive vice president of United Methodist-related Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo. The Rev. **Lovett J. Weems Jr.,** president of Saint Paul, said Dr. Vogel will serve as the seminary's chief operating offieer. A graduate of UM-related DePauw University and Saint Paul, she has been at the seminary since 1975.

FOUR REMAIN: A year after the first eross-racial clergy appointments were made in United Methodism's South Carolina Annual (regional) Conference, four of those pastors remain and one has received a new appointment at his request. South Carolina has the largest percentage of black members among conferences of the denomination. The Rev. **Robert C. Monson** of Charleston, who is white, has left predominantly black Old Bethel United Methodist Church for a new assignment at Kingstree, a predominantly white congregation. Also appointed by Bishop **Joseph Bethea,** the first blaek bishop assigned to South Carolina since the dissolution of the former Central (all-black) Jurisdiction in 1968, were the Rev. **James S. Gadsden** of Columbia and the Rev. **Charles Johnson** of Clemson, as senior pastors of predominantly white churches. Mr. Monson, the Rev. **Boyce Brooks** of Seneca and the Rev. **Carl Ritter** of Camden were appointed to predominantly black congregations.

NATIONAL AWARD: **Loretta Lever,** the coordinator of an Arkansas minority group self-determination program that has received United Methodist financial support, has been named National Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Zaire UMs 'make noise' about oppression

Bishop acknowledges danger but says citizens must speak out to change conditions

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

The number of students killed a year ago by government troops at the University of Lubumbashi in Zaire may have been as many as 350, according to reports from church sources in the country.

In April, a United Methodist man was fatally wounded in Lubumbashi when soldiers opened fired on an opposition party rally that had been approved by the governor's office.

Oppression remains

Although Mobutu Sese Seko—president of this African nation since 1965—announced some limited democratic reforms in 1990, the oppression remains, along with the country's deteriorating infrastructure and economy.

United Methodist Bishop Kainda Katembo (Southern Zaire Area) has told his people it is time to "make noise" about conditions in the country.

He acknowledged the risks of speaking out in a country where, until recently, it was against the law to criticize the government.

"But we must do something," he added. "If we just keep quiet, things will not change."

During an interview with the United Methodist television show, "Catch the Spirit,"—to be aired next fall—the bishop also acknowledged the killings of the Lubumbashi students. Although he did not speculate on the number killed, he said he regrets he "didn't do anything at the time."

The Rev. Kathleen LaCamera, "Catch the Spirit" producer, said reliable sources in Zaire told her an estimated 350 students were murdered.

The massacre occurred May 11, 1990, according to a student eyewitness filmed by "Catch the Spirit" and reports from the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.

Students were protesting

Students were protesting Mr. Mobutu's delayed timetable for reforms and punishment of three students suspected of being government spies. That evening, officials sealed off the campus, cutting the electricity.

Some students gathered outside and built fires. About 11 p.m., security forces attacked with bayonets and machetes.

"They were killing anybody they could see," the student witness said.

Because the bodies were removed, the total number of students killed has never been determined. A parliamentary commission formed to investigate reported last year that the attack had been premeditated and planned and held the governor of Shaba and other officials responsible.

The governor, a student leader and several others were brought to trial, which ended in May.

According to Peter Rosenbloom of the Lawyers Committee on Human Rights, no eyewitness testimonies were presented at the trial or civil complaints attached by the injured—common practices under Zairean law, which is styled after the legal codes of France.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY KATHLEEN LaCAMERA

MULUNGWISHI, Zaire—Children attend school at a United Methodist mission that includes elementary and high schools, a seminary, a hospital and an agricultural program. Zaire has more than 50 United Methodist missionaries at work, second only to the number assigned to Japan. Mission work in Zaire dates back to the early 1900s.

No investigation

"The problem of the trial, from our point of view . . . is we know there was never a serious investigation beforehand," he said.

Mr. Rosenbloom pointed out that certain freedoms now allowed by Mr. Mobutu could be "momentary" if he decides to rein in his power again.

"There's been no change in the structure of oppression," said Mr. Rosenbloom. "Nothing really has happened to deal with the security system or the courts."

But the people of Zaire are jumping at the chance for reform.

"Mobutu, for the last year, has been drawing lines and saying, 'I'll go this far and no farther,' " Mr. Rosenbloom explained. "The population has surged across the line almost before he's drawn it."

Treasurer says Zaire currency shortage hurts church

A United Methodist missionary based in Zaire says the church there is hurting as much from Zaire's currency problems as from oppression by government officials.

Nash Vickers, a mission treasurer based in Lubumbashi, Zaire, coordinates some 90 United Methodist Advance Special financial accounts for two of that country's five annual conferences: Southern Zaire and North Shaba.

(These, like all Advance Special projects, are supported by United Methodist "second-mile" designated gifts).

Speaking during a telephone interview while on furlough in the U.S. recently, Mr. Vickers told the Reporter that Zaire's problems are caused by a severe shortage of cash in circulation.

"When we go to the bank, it is very difficult to get cash," he said. "Of course, we have the money in the bank account. The problem is just that the cash has disappeared from circulation."

An added factor, he said, is the rising exchange rate of U.S. currency to Zaire currency. In May 1990 the rate was 500 Zaire (dollar) to the U.S. dollar. Now the exchange rate is 4,300 Zaire to the dollar.

Regarding news reports that United Methodists might receive death threats from officials of the Zairean government, Mr. Vickers said so far no church leaders have received repercussions for criticizing the president (see related story above).

"Surprisingly, there has been a lot freedom of press in Zaire," he said, "And people have taken advantage of it. But you still have to be careful. A man was killed two weeks ago for speaking out against the government."

Mr. Vickers concluded by listing ways United Methodists in this country can assist United Methodists in Zaire.

"We can always use more funds," he said. "Things in Zaire are very expensive. Virtually everything is imported."

Money is always needed for scholarships and educational programs, including the following:

■ Kafakumba Pastors' School Scholarships, Southern Zaire Conference, Advance No. 007010-4RB;

■ Institut Superieur Pedagogique at Kamina (a teacher's college), North Shaba Conference, Advance No. 010330-7RA.

■ Bicycles for Pastors, North Shaba Conference, Advance No. 011054-2RC, Southern Zaire Conference, Advance No. 000394-7AR.

Mr. Vickers has been a commissioned United Methodist missionary for nearly six years and is related to Christ United Methodist Church in Memphis, Tenn. He is one of 57 United Methodist missionaries in Zaire, whose total is second only to the number in Japan.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

"We have money in the bank account. The problem is just that the cash has disappeared from circulation."
—Nash Vickers

UMC membership grows despite Zaire's troubles

United Methodist News Service

Zaire's economic growth may be stagnant, but The United Methodist Church there is thriving.

Church membership now numbers nearly 500,000, with the only limitations on growth being personnel and funding, according to the Rev. Julius Jefferson, an executive with the World Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

"They can't train people fast enough to go out and do work," he said.

Mission work in Zaire dates to the early 1900s.

Today, there are about 50 missionaries in Zaire and numerous church-related institutions, including 250 elementary schools, 60 secondary schools, two seminaries, two training schools for local pastors, six hospitals and an assortment of health clinics.

United Methodist also are part of an ecumenical seminary in Kinshasa, the capital.

Because of its many ministries, the church is considered prosperous by Zairean standards, said Mr. Jefferson.

"People see the church as a way to improve their spiritual and material lives," he said.

United Methodist Bishop Kainda Katembo (Southern Zaire Area) also believes the church has some responsibility in advocating for better living conditions.

The Rev. Mufika Bukasa Mwawoka, now pastor of Jerusalem Church in Lubumbashi, was once arrested and jailed for a month after criticizing government leaders in a sermon for "loving the money."

But he thinks conditions in his country can change if the "mentality of might" is changed.

"I am praying for a change of the heart of Zaire, of the leaders of Zaire," he said during an interview with "Catch the Spirit," the United Methodist television program.

—LINDA BLOOM

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Church's 'high court' rules on clergy regulations

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

SAVANNAH, Ga.—United Methodist Church regulations dealing with status, appointment and pensions of clergy were upheld by the denomination's top judicial body in a series of unanimous decisions handed down recently.

The nine-member Judicial Council ruled that a candidate seeking conference membership and elder's orders must serve a mandatory two full conference years under episcopal appointment after completing educational requirements and that this time requirement cannot be shortened.

The court revoked the 1990 ordination in the Louisville Annual Conference of the Rev. Lawrence McNeill Dowdy as elder and said he must remain a probationary member until he has completed the required two years.

In a case from the Kentucky Annual Conference, the church's "supreme court" upheld specified Book of Discipline requirements for one year's service as local pastors for clergy seeking reinstatement after surrendering their ministerial office.

In another decision that involved both the Kentucky conference and the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops, the court sustained Book of Discipline provisions dealing with a pastor's responsibility for proportional pensions payments.

Answering a request from the Southern New England Annual Conference, the church's high court said that less than full-time service by a clergyperson ordinarily is limited to eight years during an individual's career.

A ruling in the New Mexico Annual Conference by Bishop Louis W. Schowengerdt that a series of questions pertaining to appointment procedures were moot and hypothetical was upheld, as was a decision by Bishop Roy I. Sano in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference denying return of credentials after surrender of ministerial office.

An Iowa Annual Conference program of church extension and revitalization was found in accord with denominational financial policies.

The decision of a North Central Jurisdiction Court of Appeals sustaining a Minnesota Annual Conference trial court verdict against a pastor on a charge of sexual harassment was upheld.

The Judicial Council denied a request for a rehearing of an October 1990 decision dealing with a clergyperson's right to trial.

The Judicial Council's next session is scheduled for Oct. 23-26 in Indianapolis.

PHOTO BY JIM STEELE

Major 'gathering' in Alabama

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—The Korean United Methodist Choir of Montgomery helps lead the "gathering" which opened sessions June 2 of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. More than 2,000 people filled Frazer Memorial UMC as the conference celebrated ethnic diversity and a membership gain of 1,700 within the past year. Bishop C.W. Hancock, who presides over the conference, was principal speaker for the "gathering" modeled after the churchwide assembly last fall in Fort Worth, Texas.

'Decade of Evangelism' launched

Anglican Archbishop says evangelism isn't assault on other faiths

By AUSTIN CARLEY
Religious News Service

LONDON—Anglican Archbishop George Carey of Canterbury has reassured non-Christians that the Decade of Evangelism in England "is not an assault by the churches on the other faith communities of this country."

The church leader gave his assurance during a meeting in Lambeth Palace with leaders of the Inter Faith Network, which was organized in March and represents 66 organizations, including Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh groups.

The Decade of Evangelism launched at the beginning of this year includes Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Free Churches, Pentecostals and members of the Evangelical Alliance.

They are trying to attract young people to the churches, particularly those who have had no previous contact with the Christian faith.

Archbishop Carey reminded his guests that Christians and non-Christians alike are living in a very secular society in Britain today and that each faith community faces the challenge differently.

"For Christians the challenge may be the greatest," he said. "We live in a culture that has been formed by the Christian faith, no matter how secularized we think it has become.

"The task facing the churches is to bring vitality to the Christian faith, to fan embers into a living worship and the service of God. That's why we have made the 1990s a decade of evangelism."

But some people have become concerned at efforts to target particular groups, especially Jews, during the campaign.

The Rev. John Fieldsend, who heads the Anglican Church's Ministry among Jews, wrote in the "Church Times" newspaper for June 14 that "not to share the good news of Jesus with Jewish people today would compound our disobedience to God and may only serve to make matters worse."

To assuage fears caused by such comments, Archbishop Carey assured the interfaith group that "you are not the victims of the Decade of Evangelism. I hope instead that we shall all be allies in standing up to the integrity of each other's faith traditions."

At the same time, however, the Anglican primate declared that "Christianity, like some other faiths, has not merely a tradition of mission but finds its identity in mission. My integrity demands that I cannot remain silent about something so deep within me. So, too, for my church."

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY DAVID KARP

'Hidden children' honor Christians

NEW YORK—Countless Jewish children were spared certain death during the Nazi Holocaust when they were hidden by Christians. Recently, grateful survivors met those who took them in, often at great risk. Sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League, the event was the first of its kind. Here one of the "hidden children" searches for information on other survivors and benefactors, hoping to make a connection.

Review

Harsh realism offered in HBO film on rape

Are Christians ready for a film like 'Rape: Cries from the Heartland'? asks reviewer

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Turn on your television set nearly any day of the week and you can find some preacher railing against premarital sex, adultery, and abortion.

It is much more rare, unfortunately, to hear Christians tackle incest, sexual harassment or rape.

Perhaps all this is changing, though, as seminaries begin to confront sexual harassment, as "12-step" groups for incest survivors spring up in local congregations, and as church women support shelters for abused women and children.

Maybe Christians now are ready for a film such as "Rape: Cries from the Heartland."

This new documentary from Home Box Office opens with a 7-year-old at the Rape Crisis Center in Memphis preparing for her day in court: she was raped by her father.

Is is rare to see victims this young? a center worker is asked.

"We have had them as young as 10 months," she replies.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HBO/CINEMAX

A woman's battered face shows bruises on her eye, ear and neck, offering vivid testimony to her terrifying experience at the hands on a rapist. Her struggle to recover from the experience—and the struggles of other victims—is captured on "Rape: Cries from the Heartland," an HBO documentary filmed at a Rape Crises Center in Memphis.

Fastest growing violent crime

According to a Senate Judiciary Committee report released in March, rape is the fastest-growing violent crime in the nation—also the most unreported.

A woman is raped every five minutes in America, we are told, and one of every five American women is sexually assaulted some time in her life.

For nearly all of these women, it is the most painful, terrifying experience of their lives. It usually takes at least a year or two to recover from the attack, and 17 percent of the victims still suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder 15 years after being raped.

All of this makes the contrast all the more stark and appalling between the young woman we meet who was raped by two men while she was pregnant, getting cut and badly bruised and contracting gonorrhea, and her convicted assailant, who admits taking part in the attack but seems uncertain as to whether or not he "hurt" her.

Presenting seven of the 1,748 cases handled last year by the Memphis center, "Rape: Cries from the Heartland" explodes many still-prevalent myths about sexual assault.

Rape, we are told, is not a form of sex but rather a form of violence.

"Rape is the release of anger; it is not someone being attracted to another," the documentary says.

The victims did not "ask for it" but rather were violated by men who carefully set up their attacks.

'Outrages go unpunished'

Most of us may think of these women as being young and good-looking, yet most of those we meet in this program are not. One is decidedly unattractive and severely retarded; another two are children; one is a 72-year-old woman who was raped and badly beaten outside her nursing home.

Nor is this last case all that atypical; nearly one in five rape victims, we are told, is over age 60.

It is distressing, too, to see how few of these outrages are punished. The police are less insensitive than they were a generation ago, but it is still difficult to get a conviction in court.

We see, however, how such a thing as a rape crisis center offers invaluable help to the victims.

Films such as this may offer similar support to those who have suffered silently for too long.

Needless to say, this is strong fare. You may find it disturbing; you almost certainly will also find it informative.

This film stresses that help is available to rape victims 24 hours a day. It ends with the toll-free number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-333-SAFE). Local editors in many areas are adding the telephone numbers of local rape crisis centers.

"Rape: Cries from the Heartland" can be seen on HBO's "America Undercover" series on Tuesday, July 2, at 10 p.m. (Eastern Time), repeating on July 7, 9, 11, and 15.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

History of Hymns

Hymn's English translation completes Gospel's circle

The bread of life for all is broken!
Christ drank the cup on Golotha,
God's grace we trust, and spread
with reverence
This holy feast, and thus remember.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

The hymn is one of 50 original Chinese hymns that first appeared in the Chinese Union hymnbook, Hymns of Universal Praise, published in Hong Kong in 1936.

The author is Timothy Tingfang Lew, who served as commission chairman for the hymnal.

One of China's leading educators and authors, Mr. Lew came to the United States and did extensive study at Columbia University, Yale University and Union Theological Seminary.

The English translation of this hymn was made by Walter R. O. Taylor, an Anglican missionary to China for 25 years. In his translation for the BBC Hymn Book (1951), Mr. Taylor sought to preserve the original meter and texture of the Chinese.

The music, Shen En (meaning "holy grace"), was composed in 1934 by Su Yin-Lan, a native of Tientsin, China. After graduating from the music department of Yenching University in Peking, she returned to her home in Tientsin with her husband.

In the summer of 1937, she gave birth to a son.

Later, when the Japanese bombed Tientsin, she was literally frightened to death by the noise of the bombing. She died at age 22.

During the last half of the 20th Century a number of hymns with non-English origins have returned to English-speaking countries in English translations; these have been welcomed and have enriched our congregational singing.

In missionary endeavors more than a century ago, English hymns were translated into other languages as the gospel was carried by well-intentioned missionaries to those distant lands.

Now from these countries have some English translations as the gospel returns to our country from other cultures.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood"

Dear Deborah

'Is it fair I almost never see my father anymore?'

Dear Deborah:

I am 10, almost 11.

A few months ago, my Dad moved out. He used to come over to see me and that was okay, I guess. But now my Mom told him he cannot come over, he has to pick me up and take me out or to his place. So I almost never get to see him anymore.

Could you tell my Mom she is not fair?

Thanks, Andy

Dear Andy:

I think you need to figure out what you mean by "I guess" it's okay when your Dad came over.

Are you mad at him for leaving? Or afraid your Mom will disappear, too?

Those are difficult things for a young person to deal with. I hope you can talk this over with both your mother and father.

If you cannot, then how about your pastor or someone at school? You should not have to carry this alone.

Please pray for them both. Your Mom probably is unhappy and is doing the best she can. Your dad may be having his own problems.

Even adults cannot always make life turn out the way they want it to be. But if you can talk with each of them, maybe they will be able to work out a better arrangement for you. You will be in my prayers, too.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Review

'Human faith, divine mystery' are themes of novel

By FREDERIC and MARY ANN BRUSSAT
Religious News Service

Christ's passion. Resurrection. Grace. Ministry. Saint days and the liturgy.

These are not the usual themes of popular novels. But they are precisely the themes tackled by Gail Godwin in her eighth novel, "Father Melancholy's Daughter" (William Morrow and Company).

Ms. Godwin's most recent work of fiction, "A Southern Family," spent two months on the "New York Times" best-seller list. Two of her other books, "A Mother and Two Daughters" and "The Finishing School," were also popular successes.

This one, perhaps because it is so overtly "religious," has not received as much attention.

'Shines with insights of grace'

It should.

"Father Melancholy's Daughter" is a radiant work of art that shines with insights into family, parent-child relationships, ministry and grace.

Margaret Gower, the title character, is the daughter of an Episcopal priest who struggles with his bouts of depression. His parishioners in a North Carolina town are less concerned about his melancholy than they are interested in his missing wife.

When Margaret was six years old, she returned from school one day to learn that her mother, Ruth, had left home with a female college friend, a set designer for the theater. The departure was completely unexpected.

Ruth was killed in an automobile accident within a year, and neither her husband nor child ever knew if she might have eventually come back had she lived.

The two survivors spend 16 years dealing with the questions attached to this central event in their lives.

Margaret grows up collecting stories about runaway mothers, trying to understand.

She becomes her father's caretaker, confidant, and student as he fights his depressions and deals with the petty politics of his small parish.

Then, during Easter week of Margaret's senior year in college, Father Gower finds his traditional ministry under attack—literally—from the pressures of the town's development.

Passion story becomes real

Margaret comes home to witness the playing out of the passion story in a new and vitally relevant context, both communally and personally.

Adrian, another minister in the town, observes that original sin could be seen as having "something to do with repeating our parents' mistakes."

This leads Father Gower in his Holy Week meditations to observe that Christ's passion reflects the different stages of pain, disappointment, suffering and grief in our lives. The believer plays out the passion in his or her own autobiography.

Gail Godwin's religious perspective permeates every layer of this storyline.

"Resurrection applies to each of us," Father Gower asserts.

It means "coming up through what you were born into, then understanding objectively the people your parents were and how they influenced you," and then going beyond deterministic psychology to action in the present moment.

"You have to find out *what* you are in the human drama, or body of God. The what *beyond* the who, so to speak."

At one point in the story, this challenge seems insurmountable to Margaret.

"How can you finish with being a daughter," she wonders, "when you don't know who your mother really was?"

Surprises around every bend

Still, there are surprises around every bend, and Margaret searches them for meaning.

After a trip to England with an unlikely companion, she discovers her own calling—her what—in life.

"Father Melancholy's Daughter" is a rare and remarkable novel, resplendent with respect for the mysteries of God and love for the human adventure in the family of faith.

THE BUTTERFLY

Walking with You in the morning light, speaking of my pain
my sorrow. You listen, asking only that I allow You to hear me.
My heart embraced by Your Goodness, feeling a Oneness
new to me, I was startled as I stumbled over a butterfly.

Dismayed we knelt over the small creature, antennae twitching
We knew it still to have life yet Our touch did not send it
soaring above the grasses. With great sadness in Our hearts
We lifted him from the gutter gently laying him upon the grasses
and the dirt from which he came.

Instantly my understanding of You was transformed realizing what you must have felt these many years as I suffered. The depth of my pain You knew all too well, my despair bringing You great sorrow. How could this not be so when I in all my humanity am touched with such deep sadness at the loss of a butterfly. Could it be that my Creator would feel the wounds of His own child any less so?

—PAM WYNN

methodist
children's
home
news

children's home

Aunt Bessie's Love Will Continue

Walking around Mansfield with my ninety year old aunt, Miss Bessie Pickels, was always fun. Every where we went someone would stop and engage my aunt in conversation.

"Miss Bessie, How are you today? Do you remember me? You taught me in the first grade." Miss Bessie would smile, acknowledge the greeting and continue down the street. She didn't see the necessity for an automobile because you could walk to town, and besides she loved the friendly greetings.

She would turn to me and say, "You know I taught most of the first graders in Mansfield for thirty years." To her, the first graders were still her pupils, even 50 years later.

Aunt Bessie was at her best when she would stiffen her back bone, hold her head up to her full height of five feet and with her best school teacher voice tell of her first year of teaching in Breaux Bridge. In 1911 it was not considered educationally sound for any French to be spoken in the classroom. Young beginning teachers from North Louisiana were hired to teach in the south Louisiana French speaking parishes so the children would be forced to speak English.

Miss Bessie would say, "The first day of class, I walked into my classroom and there were about fifty little children sitting very still with their wide eyes glued on me. (You wouldn't find them still like that today.) I couldn't speak a word of French and they couldn't speak a word of English. I didn't know what to do. Finally I had an idea.

I drew a picture of a boy on a blackboard and one little girl stood up and gave me the French word for boy. Picture after picture on the long board around the room, the little girl and I taught new English words. Then I would tell the most exciting story I could think of and illustrate it as I talked. The children loved it and in no time they knew many words."

Miss Bessie believed in children behaving and showing respect for their teacher. I know this to be true from personal observation. I shall never forget a visit I had with a bank officer in Baton Rouge. I knew that he had been a boy in Mansfield and when I first met him in his office I told him that my grandmother and aunt had lived just down the street from his home. This very successful fifty year old man told me that he had once put "Miss Bessie's" lawn chair up in a tree on Halloween. What makes me know that he still knew that Miss Bessie would not have approved of his behavior was his bright red face as he relived the experience.

A bank employee in Mansfield told me Miss Bessie was a good teacher but she was strict.

Yes, she was a determined, self-disciplined little lady that believed that children should have every opportunity to grow to be their very best. Out of her small teacher's salary she saved enough money to give each of my children a small "nest egg" to assure them of an educational opportunity. Not only was she concerned about the children in her own family, but those in her church family as well.

Her last will and testament testifies to her love for first graders. She asked me, as executor of her estate, to see that the Methodist Children's Home received some of the benefit of her estate. I think she was very wise to continue to show her love to others who needed her and I am very proud to call her my Aunt Bessie.

Dorothy Howell
June 1991

"Aunt Bessie"

The State Has Made Your Will

METHODIST
children's home

It's Free To All 'Senior Citizens, DMA, Older Adults' University UMC Of Lake Charles Had An Idea:

There are many organized groups for those in advanced years in churches throughout the Louisiana Annual Conference.

If these more mature adults are typical of others in their age group across the country at least 50% of them do not have a will and many of those who do have not up-dated it in recent years.

As personal circumstances change so should a will.

Recently a gift of over $60,000.00 was left to the Methodist Children's Home by one who was greatly concerned about young people and their future.

Because the will was not properly signed it was contested. We lost the gift and the donor's final wish was ignored.

It's important to have an up to date will and one that is legal.

We received a call from Marge Robinson at University UMC in Lake Charles. She asked if they might have enough copies of the first "Wills" leaflet for each member of their group.

The answer was yes!! We were willing and pleased to help the members of their group.

We will be happy to send the wills material to the members of any group of older adults. Just send us the number of copies you need or a list of names so we can mail direct.

New Wills Material Available

Last year MCH mailed special information about "Wills" to all donors who had made a contribution to the home before May 1990.

The material was well received and appreciated by those who support the Home and received the mailings.

We have just begun a second year of our project to inform and help both those who have and have not written a will.

We began in May of this year sending the leaflet "The State Has Made Your Will" to those who made their first donation since May 1990.

The material is available to everyone who requests it, even if they are not on the donor list. Write to:

Rev. August E. Aamodt
Director of Development
P.O. Box 929
Ruston, LA 71273-0929

6-L--COMP 018000 0417910
CAROLYN GARSTON
CENTENARY COLLEGE
LIBRARY BOX 4188
SHREVEPORT, LA 71104-

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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An Eternal 4th of July

This week's column is written by Dr. Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications, Louisiana Area United Methodist Church. She is a member of Munholland United Methodist Church in Metairie.

Tattered yellow ribbons droop on trees and doorways. American flags wave faded stars and stripes. Tears once shed at departures now flow freely for joyous homecomings. The Desert Storm troops — which included my husband — are home.

Despite some disquiet about burning oil wells, refugees and casualties of war, Americans have returned to the more mundane concerns of raising children, earning a living, paying taxes . . . And with the return to normalcy, there is a palpable emotional letdown. A sense of relief to be sure, but also an uneasiness that in victory something has been lost.

During Operation Desert Storm, there was a quickening in the air: an excitement borne of looming dread and danger; a sense that with much to risk, there was much to gain. As we were asked to lay aside malignant individualism for the common good; were asked to sacrifice for a cause — even one often ill-defined — something happened to us. We plugged into core American values that tapped into our collective soul.

Patriotism does that. Love of country calls us to move beyond ourselves into realms of selflessness. And when we respond to that call, something happens. We break free and live for a time on other spiritual planes.

Love of God does that too. The difference with Him though is that the spirit remains when the flag waving ends.

Sarah S. Kreutziger

1991 Louisiana Annual Conference Ordinands

ELDERS ORDAINED DURING THE 1991 ANNUAL CONFERENCE — Pictured front row l. to r., the Reverends Larry Martin Sr., Mary Sloan Baugh, Maria Jeanine Kennedy, and Isiah Matthew Lee Jr. Back row l. to r., Jon Eric Tellifero, Kenneth Mach Graham Jr., Gary Don Willis, Richard Owens Teeter, and Michael Stuart Sherman.

DEACONS ORDAINED DURING THE 1991 ANNUAL CONFERENCE — Pictured front row l. to r., the Reverends Darlene Anita Moore James, Martha Kirk Wofford Pleasant, Lyndle Ray Bullard, Terilynn Russ and Karen Elisa Albano. Back row l. to r., Macky Ray Giles, Wybra Joseph Price II, Martin Wesley Corie, Timothy Michael Smith, Barry Earl Hughes, Barry Hoekstra, Brian Richard Barron and Marcell Anthony Johnson.

Diaconal Ministers Consecrated During the 1991 Annual Conference — Pictured are Ms. Linda Claire Fox and Ms. Charlotte Treadway Brent.

Volunteers to Hold Rally

Bishop J. Woodrow Wilson, President of the General Board of Global Ministries and Resident Bishop of Nebraska, will be the keynote speaker for SuperServe 91, the South Central Jurisdiction Volunteers in Mission Rally.

The Sixth Annual Volunteers in Mission Rally will be held at the beautiful Mount Sequoyah located in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on Labor Day Weekend, August 31 to September 2, 1991. SuperServe celebrates the past ministry of volunteers in mission while training and equipping future volunteers for service.

Ten training workshops will cover the following areas: organizing VIM teams, VIM is evangelists, medical VIM; youth VIM; VIM for individuals and couples; VIM opportunities in Brazil, VIM opportunities in Africa, cross-cultural VIM experiences, telling the VIM story back home and information about the General Board of Global Ministries. Each person has a choice of three workshops to attend.

Mission agencies which recruit volunteers will have booths and there will be time for participants to sign up to join VIM teams going to various parts of the world.

SuperServe 91 includes an outstanding list of speakers and workshop leaders. Among them are: Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos of Brazil; Mr. Ezekiel Makunike of Zimbabwe, currently on the New World Outlook staff; Mr. Bill Rollins, National VIM Coordinator with the General Board of Global Ministries from New York; and Dr. Kenneth McIntosh, South Central Jurisdictional Field Representative for the General Board of Global Ministries. Music leadership will be provided by Larry and Helen Eisenburg of Tulsa, Oklahoma, co-authors of the new **Joyful Noise** songbook.

For further information contact the Louisiana Conference VIM Coordinator, the Reverend George Duerson, at 3401 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70119; 504-488-5430; or Max Marble, the South Central Jurisdictional Volunteers in Mission Coordinator, 2144 Swallow Lane, Lewisville, TX 75067; 214-317-3606.

Dr. James J. Caraway Accepts New Position

Dr. James J. Caraway, who retired this year from the Louisiana Conference, has been named Executive Secretary of the National Association of United Methodist Foundations. The former Louisiana Conference treasurer began his assignment July 1.

Dr. Caraway is the first staff person for this national church position. In addition to organizing the office, which serves to promote and facilitate the establishment and improvements of Conference and area United Methodist foundations throughout the General Church, he will act as consultant to bishops and Annual Conferences; coordinate publicity, seminars and workshops; lobby boards and agencies in the Church on behalf of the Foundation; and oversee a superfund for pooling the financial resources of all the Annual Conferences.

Dr. Caraway points out that the National Association of United Methodist Foundations is a rapidly-growing organization that has amassed over $350,000,000 in assets during the last ten years. Currently, fifty Annual Conferences (out of seventy-two) participate in its work. He sees the decade ahead as a tremendous opportunity to increase the endowments and assets for local churches, Annual Conferences and the General Church.

The United Methodist Foundation Movement, he says, originated from United Methodism's grass-roots (local churches and Annual Conferences) rather than from a program handed down from the General Church. As such, the job offers many possibilities and challenges that answer a felt need within the local churches. Dr. Caraway is excited about answering that call to service.

UMM Sponsor Prayer Line

Louisiana United Methodist Men, (UMM) in cooperation with the Upper Room Prayer Ministry, became part of a national network of intercessory prayer groups throughout United Methodism during Annual Conference.

The Upper Room Prayer Center began in 1977 in Nashville, Tennessee, as an outreach of the Upper Room Prayer Ministry. Its purpose is to provide "specific direction and practical guidance in prayer and spiritual growth," as well as to establish intercessory prayer and growth groups throughout the Church.

Each local Upper Room Covenant Prayer Group is formed around a covenant with the Upper Room. The covenant requires that the participants meet at least once a month to share prayer concerns both locally and church-wide through the Living Prayer Center and to participate in a preparatory study of Maxie Dunnam's **The Workshop of Living Prayer.** The Living Prayer Center is staffed by "volunteers who receive prayer requests by phone, pray with persons who call . . . and relay the requests by mail to Upper Room Covenant Groups. Additionally, resources are provided to the prayer groups on a regular basis.

During Annual Conference, a Remote Prayer Center was set up by Louisiana UMM to receive calls from all over the nation. Mr. Ofney Ellis of the Baton Rouge UMM, Prayer Advocate for the Louisiana Conference, and Mr. Ronald Sarver of Lafayette, vice-president of the Conference UMM, coordinated a staff of volunteers from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday, to answer the prayer requests phoned in during that time. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Sarver both counted this experience as one of the highpoints of their work at Conference. Mr. Boyd Baun, UMM Conference president underscored their feelings with the observation that those who took prayer requests benefited from their work as much as those who made the requests. An increased desire "for Bible study and prayer groups in their local churches" was one of the major results of the efforts of the volunteers.

Mr. Baun sees a larger benefit from the prayer lines for the organization itself. As he says, "the prayer line work helps charter new UMM's groups because it helps men to know what the UMM are about, besides answering a real need in the church." Mr. Baun sees the prayer project as one of the major missions for the Louisiana UMM and hopes that more groups will get involved.

In the meantime, the national Upper Room prayer line continues its service 24 hours a day. The number for prayer requests is 1-800-251-2468. Written requests can be mailed to The Upper Room Living Prayer Center, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202.

Scenes from MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services

G. J. "Jerry" Bridges, president of MacDonell UM Children's Services, addressed senior and graduate level students enrolled in a child abuse course at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux. He is shown with Dr. Grace Monk, Head of the Department of Nursing and Allied Health Technology of N.S.U.

G. J. "Jerry" Bridges (left), MacDonell UM Children's Services president, congratulates Bryan Augustine on his selection as Employee of the Quarter. Mr. Augustine is a child care worker at the residential facility for children, who for various reasons, are unable to live at home. Mr. Augustine was selected for this honor because of the conscientious, caring, and consistent attitude he displays while performing his duties.

Volunteer Activist Gala Proceeds Donated

Proceeds from the 1990 Tri-Parish Volunteer Activist Gala were donated to MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services at a morning reception held at Wesley House on MacDonell's campus.

Gala Chairman Tara Ayo, Co-Chairman Quinnie Hubbell, and Dillard's Manager Dick Ennis presented the funds to MacDonell President G. J. Bridges. Dillard's is a major sponsor of the annual event honoring outstanding volunteers from Terrebonne, Lafourche and St. Mary parishes.

The Gala was a resounding success. Proceeds from ticket sales and the silent auction, featuring items donated by area merchants and individuals, amounted to $10,500.

Janet Buescher, B.C.S.W., conducted a workshop recently for the staff of MacDonell UM Children's Services. Buescher, clinical director of the Children's Unit of Bayou Oaks Hospital, presented information and conducted a discussion on the S.T.E.P. program. S.T.E.P. is an acronym for Systematic Training for Effective Parenting. The program was presented in a framework focusing on effective parenting skills which can be utilized by the child care worker. Ms. Buescher (2nd from left), is pictured with staff members, Michael Guidroz, vice president of social services; G. J. "Jerry" Bridges, president; and Jayne Sommer, program director.

G. J. "Jerry" Bridges, president of MacDonell UM Children's Services, accepts a donation from Mrs. Ginny McMurray, Rayne UMC's UMW president. The check was presented following a visit to Rayne by Mr. Bridges. MacDonell is an outreach project of the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries.

New officers of MacDonell UM Children's Services Board of Directors are shown with president G. J. "Jerry" Bridges, (2nd from left): Rodney Serpas, treasurer; William Wilder, chair; and the Rev. Vernon Fairley, vice chair. Not pictured is Grace Monk, secretary. Elected members of the board include: the Rev. J. Henry Bowdon Jr., Erelene Bradford, Walter Brock, Inez Chrisentery, Chris Hall, William R. Ladd, John Laing, Janelle McCammon, Marcia Moser, and the Rev. Joe Rountree.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

'Pop' culture, the real world and Christianity

One of the summer's hottest films, "Thelma & Louise," appears on the surface to be a "buddy" film about two women who go on an outlaw rampage.

The film makes no mention of religion, nor does it reflect a Christian worldview or morality.

So how should Christians deal with such a film—or popular musical album, trendy art exhibit, "hot" Broadway production—whose content is mostly or wholly secular?

A clue can be found in a recent "Time" magazine cover story on "Thelma & Louise." It says the movie is one of those rare films that creatively exposes deeply troubling aspects of our culture: the propensity toward violence, tensions in male-female relationships, a drift toward meaninglessness and despair, etc.

"Consciously or not," the article states,"[such] films tend to serve as expressions of the values or confusions jangling around in . . . society, or occasionally as springboards for earnest discussions of them."

In other words, provocative movies and other forms of popular culture can provide revealing, albeit troubling, windows on the "real world" in which we, as Christians, are called to live and witness.

They expand our horizons and deepen our awareness of the "principalities and powers" that confront our efforts to proclaim and live the Christian Gospel.

How can we credibly advocate life in Christ if we don't know and confront the worldly alternatives?

While we do not believe the salvation of the world turns on Christians viewing films like "Thelma & Louise," neither can we affirm a head-in-the-sand effort to avoid such cultural phenomena. The world is unlikely to be saved if Christians avoid contact with any but the most sanitized expressions of pop culture.

On theological grounds, Christians are called to be "in" but not "of" the world. Following Jesus means being sufficiently grounded in God's Word that our faith is brought to bear in every encounter rather than our faith being shaped to reflect every worldly value we encounter.

In practical terms, it is unrealistic for Christians living in a free society to expect that anyone can or should shut out life's unsavory aspects. We need not approve what films such as "Thelma & Louise" reveal about life. But we can use them to ponder deeply and to share with others what it means to be a Christian in a sinful and broken world.

Here are basic guidelines for Christians seeking to interact creatively with various forms of popular culture:

■ **Use common sense.** Much "pop," in fact, merely glorifies vulgarity, violence and dehumanization. If in doubt, consult reliable reviewers and Christian friends before viewing a particular movie or purchasing a best-selling book.

■ **Be alert to both explicit and implicit questions about life's spiritual and moral dimensions.** How does the movie's (or song's, painting's, etc.) message compare with a Christian view of life?

■ **Be critical.** Encourage family and/or Sunday school discussion. Ask what implications, if any, there are for our efforts to shape our culture with a Christian vision of life.

■ **Spend as much time discerning God's Word and will as we do absorbing expressions of worldly culture.**

Susan Sarandon (left) and Geena Davis star in one of the summer's hottest movies, "Thelma & Louise." From a Christian perspective, provocative movies and other forms of popular culture can, at their best, provide revealing, albeit sometimes troubling, windows on the "real world."

My Witness

We must help the Kurds descend to valley of hope

By R. DEAN HANCOCK

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. R. Dean Hancock lives in New York City and is Project Officer of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Abraham went up to the mountain to sacrifice his son, Issac. Moses went up to the mountain to consult with God about worship of the golden calf. Jesus went up to the mountain to be tempted by Satan.

The Kurdish people went up to the mountain to escape death in the valleys, to endure freezing cold, to bury their dead and to wait for the day of descent and safe return to their villages.

At Ishikveren, Turkey, alone, 150,000 refugees sought refuge on the side of the mountain. There at Ishikveren, "love in action" became a reality in the form of 12 tons of food and medicines shipped in by the Middle East Council of Churches emergency team.

The emergency response is being coordinated by Melvin and Nancy Wittler, United Church of Christ missionaries in Turkey for 35 years, through the MECC office in Istanbul.

Response has been dramatic

The response has been dramatic. The World Council of Churches and Church World Service and Witness have provided 66 tons of medicines, 30,000 pairs of shoes, children's underwear, tents and high protein biscuits for the relief of the suffering refugees.

In Eastern Turkey, the program is administered out of an ancient monastery. For 1,594 years, the Mor (Saint) Gabriel Monastery, established in 397, has quietly and firmly kept alive the teachings of Jesus in Aramaic, his spoken tongue.

Suddenly, the serene routine of the monks and nuns has been interrupted as semi-trucks of relief supplies arrive to be stored in the subterranean corridors of the monastery.

Only a few feet away, behind thick stone walls, are ancient manuscripts of Jesus' teachings. In this relief effort the historical Jesus emerges as the living Christ.

The story of the Good Samaritan is repeated 500,000 times in the lives of refugees. Bishop Samuel Aktas and his monastery staff are giving unselfishly of themselves to carry out a mission of mercy.

On Sunday, May 17th, Bishop Aktas, MECC staff members and I were able to tour most of a northern Iraq "safe haven" by helicopter. We set down in the villages and talked with families who had descended from their mountain refuge to a mid-point, hugging the northern border, but too fearful for their safety to venture further.

In the Zaho camp, life seemed good as women baked traditional bread, children played and relief agencies set up clinics and sanitary systems. Although the refugees were grateful to be in safe haven and have basic necessities, none dared to let his mind probe the tomorrow and what it might bring.

When we flew to a "way station" set up by the British forces to assist families on their return journey, the bird's-eye view from the helicopter looked as if 20,000 campers had pitched their tents for a weekend outing.

Behind that mountain, we were told, 100,000 refugees anxiously waited, uncertain and apprehensive, not wanting to venture into a valley of death.

A new challenge

Their descent from the mountain means that the Middle East Council of Churches will have to respond to a new challenge and dimension. Tents will give way to house repairs, high protein biscuits to live chickens, water purification tablets will be replaced by wells and canned meat by sheep, goats and cattle.

This will not happen without the input of new resources and personnel skilled in agriculture and community development.

United Methodists are called to respond to the Persian Gulf Crisis. This response will, in part, determine whether or not the descent for Kurdish refugees will be to the valley of hope or the valley of death.

Letters to the Editor

Can ministers get away with blasphemy?

A recent article appeared in a major daily newspaper stating the views of a prominent United Methodist minister.

Quote: "He does not believe in such mysteries as the divinity of Christ, or the virgin birth, or Christ's resurrection in the literal sense of most Christians."

If a United Methodist minister is allowed to express these beliefs in his sermons and state them to the press, is this not sending a message to Christians everywhere that we are to listen to any teaching that is presented and not rely on the Scriptures for the truth?

1 Corinthians 15:12-17 clearly teaches about the Resurrection, and the book of John is full of Jesus' messages concerning who He is.

Presbyterians just voted overwhelmingly to support the Scriptures vs. current trends in society. When is the United Methodist church going to take a firm stand with its ministers and demand an accountability of what they profess to believe according to the vows they took when they were ordained?

If a prominent minister has the gall to state such blasphemy to the press, what are other ministers preaching to their own congregations? It makes one wonder.

Suzanne Gregg
Arlington, Texas

No 'biblical sex ethic'

At its recent annual meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention took the unusual step of criticizing a Presbyterian study report on sexuality (see UMR, June 28). The Baptists then approved a resolution urging "all Christians to uphold the biblical standard of human sexuality against all onslaughts."

Maybe they don't know their Bibles as well as they claim. Do they realize that this resolution now obligates them to execute all adulterers, as Deuteronomy 22:22 unequivocally demands?

Southern Baptists have no intention of upholding "the biblical standard of human sexuality." What they fail to recognize is that the Bible has no single sex ethic, but a series of sexual arrangements that evolved over its 1,000-year history. There is no "biblical sex ethic."

What Jesus taught is a love ethic, which must constantly be brought to bear on whatever sexual mores are dominant in any given culture.

Presbyterians are seriously trying to address the morality of sexual standards far different than many of us knew when we were young. They are trying to live in the present.

Southern Baptists ought to learn something from them instead of living in the past.

Walter Wink
New York, New York

Statement challenged

The May 31 letter from June E. Rothe-Barneson is understandable in its request for recognition for a number of individuals and agencies in relief activities.

However, the last paragraph of her letter stating that the war was "initiated largely by the United States" is unbelievable coming from someone who surely read and viewed the facts that this war was initiated by Saddam Hussein. The action of the United States and its allies was undertaken only to defend and rescue innocent people from his inhumane attacks.

It is unbelievable to me that people such as Ms. Rothe-Barneson are so prejudiced against the United States as to make the statement quoted above, and I will not let it go unchallenged.

E. C. Edens, Jr.
Houston, Texas

Legal issue questioned

I don't see why a Mission Society missionary should be seen as a legal liability to the church as Bishop Leroy Hodapp contends (see UMR, May 24).

Our church's general rules commit us to evidence our desire for salvation, "by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially . . . brother going to law with brother . . ."

We are also committed to show our desire positively, "by doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men."

Finally, if a Wall Street broker's contract can bind him to arbitration in a civil matter and the U.S. Supreme Court uphold it, I imagine an agreement to accept an appointment can make some similar provision.

Kelley Walker
Hillsboro, Ohio

God is nice, editorial isn't..

The May 24 editorial was headlined, "Is Your God too nice?"

I was disappointed to see the idea promoted that God might be "too nice." Yes, God is nice, and I hope He continues to be so. I believe that is the message Jesus brought to us. God forgives and loves us no matter what we do. We make many mistakes in this human life of ours and the bottom line is that God is NICE and loves us anyway.

The editorial indicates that we should rejoice in God's laws and limits. In my estimation, God does not have any limits. We as human beings may limit ourselves. We limit ourselves, we hurt ourselves, by being unkind to ourselves and to others (i.e. unethical and immoral behavior).

We limit ourselves when we try to find fulfillment outside in the things of the world, instead of inside, in a nice God. We may limit ourselves in many ways, but God is limitless. God waits nicely to offer his love to us.

Cindy Myska
Austin, Texas

Columbus defended

I have been amazed at the many articles I have read in the Reporter and other United Methodist publication that attack Christopher Columbus and his exploration.

We have been advised not to celebrate the 500th anniversary of his "discovery" of the New World in 1492. The articles typically mention the exploitation of the native population and other acts of injustice by other Europeans that followed.

These are valid points. However, I believe that many in our denomination suffer from a case of tunnel vision. They are able to see only the negative when it comes to certain groups, i.e., Europeans.

As in America, many injustices occurred, but also many positive things happened as well. Warring among the various tribes decreased, the idea of a unified nation developed. Most important of all, thanks to devout Christians, the saving truth of the Gospel reached my land.

The same is true in North and South America. Not all Europeans came to exploit. There were missionaries who loved the native people and labored among them for the Gospel's sake.

All cultures have reason for pride, and reason to be ashamed of the past. This fact is true whatever ones heritage is. As Paul reminds us, "there are none righteous."

Ester R. Mays
Le Center, Minnesota

What others are saying

"Farming is risky business. You're forever dependent on God and the government."
—Ex-farmer Hank Bandstra, Pella, Iowa

* * *

"The great task before us now and you as citizens of the world is to learn how to organize our societies in such a way that unpredictable things have a chance to happen."
—Freeman Dyson, nuclear physicist, speaking to Haverford College (Pa.) graduates.

* * *

"Whatever values you apply to work are the values that drive you in your everyday life."
—Newspaper designer Robert Lockwood.

* * *

"Stewardship is more than setting up soup kitchens and overnight shelters. It is good and right that we reach into the river of despair and rescue people who are drowning. But, as has often been said, it is time to move upstream and see who's throwing them in."
—Bishop Edmund L. Browning, presiding bishop, Episcopal Church

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"For we are fellow workers for God; you are God's field, God's building." (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ____ : *Verse* ____

(Last week's answer: 1 Peter 2:10)

Readings for week of July 8

Monday: Psalms 89:1-19
Tuesday: Psalms 89:20-37
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 7:1-17
Thursday: Mark 6:1-6
Friday: 2 Corinthians 12:1-10
Saturday: 2 Corinthians 12:11-21
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 13

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith watch

QUAKE HITS CHURCH: The 2,000-member First United Methodist Church of Pasadena, Calif., was among buildings damaged June 28 when an earthquake rated 6.0 on the Richter Scale shook southern California. Damage to the sanctuary, which was to be retrofitted to meet new quake-proofing codes, was serious enough that the congregation had to worship elsewhere July 1. Further reports of injuries to United Methodists or damage to church property will be published as available.

SOUTH AFRICAN VISIT: When the Rev. **Emilio Castro**, World Council of Churches chief executive, visits South Africa Oct. 12-23, he will break a barrier that has been in place for the past 30 years. The last visit to South Africa by the top official of the World Council took place in 1960 when the council organized a conference on apartheid in Cottesloe, near Johannesburg. Dr. Castro, a Uruguayan Methodist, has been invited by the South African Council of Churches to support the churches in their efforts to achieve a peaceful transition from a society based on racial segregation to one that is democratic and non-racial.

Emilio Castro

EUTHANASIA SUPPORT SEEN: A vote taken by the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church indicates that support for active euthanasia is spreading into the religious mainstream. Clergy and lay representatives attending the regional gathering in Tacoma endorsed Initiative 119, the "Death with Dignity" measure going before voters in Washington State Nov. 5 that would permit doctor-assisted suicides. The United Methodist resolution expressed belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person as a creation of God, as taught by Jesus.

GREEK ORTHODOX LEAVE: The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, a 1.9-million-member denomination, has suspended all activity in the National Council of Churches pending a review this fall. The Rev. **Milton B. Efthimiou**, the archdiocesan ecumenical officer, cited the "liberal leanings" of the Protestant denominations as the reason behind the action. The Rev. **Joan Brown Campbell**, NCC chief executive, said the move is a "surprise, shock and disappointment," even though the council's relationship to the Greek Orthodox "is and has been a fragile one."

SHOULD HE STEP DOWN?: Bishop **Herbert W. Chilstrom** should step down as ranking leader of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, says the conservative "Lutheran Commentator" of Minneapolis. In an editorial calling for the bishop's resignation, the publication asserts that Bishop Chilstrom has "unfortunately become the focus of much of the anger that grips this denomination—anger that stems from the ELCA's pervasive confusion about its identity and purpose." Bishop Chilstrom is completing his first four-year term and is expected to be a candidate for re-election at the denomination's Churchwide Assembly in late August in Orlando, Fla.

Herbert Chilstrom

SEMINARY GETS GRANT: A $477,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., will be used by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis for programs ranging from an ongoing institute for church/community dialogue on current issues to field education for students, according to Dr. **Richard D.N. Dickinson**, seminary president. The seminary is a school of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Most of its graduates are ordained clergy serving as pastors of congregations, Mr. Dickinson said.

Scouting leaders explore new ministries

National conference takes 'duty to God' as serious guide toward youth work

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

CIMARRON, N.M—What does "duty to God" have to do with Scouting?

To United Methodist Scout leaders like Bill and Susan Alexander of Ironton, Ohio, the linkage, being challenged in some U.S. courtrooms, is simple: everything.

The Alexanders were among some 55 United Methodist Scout leaders attending a recent week-long national conference at Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, N.M.

Living in tents in a cool, grassy glade in the Rocky Mountains, some 6,500 feet above sea level, the leaders were there to do three things:

■ Learn more about Explorer Scouting, in which teenagers, male and female, learn about careers;

■ Learn ways in which Scout troops and United Methodist Youth Ministries could work more closely;

■ Share ideas and problems.

(United Methodist youth serving ministries include Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts U.S.A., Camp Fire and 4-H.)

When not in conference sessions or sharing worship they explored some of the ranch's 137,000 acres of mountains, valleys and woodlands.

Mr. Alexander, 29, a chemical engineer with Dow Chemical, and his wife moved to Ohio more than a year ago and joined Ironton First United Methodist Church.

They became youth leaders at the 200-member church and developed a Boy Scout program.

Mr. Alexander, an Eagle Scout, is the Scoutmaster; his wife is the assistant. The troop has 18 boys.

"Scouting has helped my relationship with Christ," Mrs. Alexander told the Reporter over breakfast in the ranch dining hall.

"When you are trying to be a role model for youth, you need to know what you are talking about," she said.

Ironton is in a depressed area with high unemployment, Mr. Alexander said. To help youths and to allow girls to be a part of the program, the church has chartered an Explorer post.

In Explorer Scouting, youths can explore a wide range of career opportunities, he said, and hook into a nationwide network of Explorer Scouts.

"On camping trips, we have testimony about what God has done for us," said Mrs. Alexander.

"Outdoors is a laboratory of God's creation," Mr. Alexander said, looking through the window at the mountain peaks.

"There's no way you can look at land formation and question who made it, it's so magnificent."

Dale Waymire

Among those participating with the Alexanders was longtime Scout leader Dale Waymire of Madill, Okla. He agrees with them that Scouting is vital to youth ministry.

Mr. Waymire is national president of the United Methodist Men Foundation. United Methodist Men have placed major emphasis on Scouting since the revitalization of the men's group in 1974.

"We know that spiritual training is important in the development of responsible youth," he said, "both in the kingdom and in the country."

One important way Scouting can contribute to spiritual training, he said, is through Scouting's God and Country medals. These medals are available not only to Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts but also through Camp Fire and 4-H, the other national youth organizations related to United Methodism's Scouting ministries.

Youths work on God and Country awards under supervision of an adult or with a local pastor of the youth's denomination.

The God and Country program seeks to relate young people to God through the church, he said.

"United Methodist Scout units have more than 330,000 members. We've awarded about 10,000 God and Country medals, so we've got a lot more opportunity to work on these," Mr. Waymire concluded.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

CIMARRON, N.M.—Elizabeth Smith helps her grandchild, Ariel Thomas of Houston, create a family of ceramic rabbits. Ms. Smith, a member of Elmwood West United Methodist Church in Abilene, Texas, was one of 55 United Methodist Scout leaders who attended a recent week-long national conference at Philmont Scout Ranch.

Mother of 4 Eagle Scouts says Scouting revived her

Reporter Staff Special

CIMARRON, N.M.—"When my daughter died of cancer, I didn't want to live," Shirley Lundy said.

Yet Mrs. Lundy, a member of Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kan., still had four young sons, so some 20 years ago she and the boys got involved in Boy Scouts of America.

"It was therapy for me," she said. "It still is."

Mrs. Lundy became a Boy Scout leader, and all four sons became Eagle Scouts.

Her oldest son, Kenneth, finished the requirements for his Eagle while awaiting a donor for a liver transplant.

"That's all that kept him going," she said. "He had to get that Eagle."

Several years ago Mrs. Lundy started a Cub Scout pack in the poorest area of Wichita.

The pack was started at the Brookside United Methodist Church in a part of town where many single mothers were employed part time at best, she said. A lot of the boys were never around men, she said.

Children there could not afford uniforms or books, she said, "but, oh, the difference [Scouting] has made in the lives of those boys!"

Money for uniforms and books was donated by a single family, she said.

Smiling, she remembers the delight the youngsters took in their uniforms.

Shirley Lundy
. . .Scouting leader

On a rare trip out of their neighborhood, Mrs. Lundy took them to a store with Scouting supplies. The Cubs were amazed at all the badges they could earn, she said.

"How can I earn that?" they would ask eagerly, pointing to a special badge.

The impoverished neighborhood now has two thriving Cub Scout troops and a Boy Scout troop with leaders, male and female, recruited from the neighborhood.

Scouts and leaders are learning to take pride in their accomplishments, some of them for the first time, she said.

And, she said, the program has brought some of the Scouts and their families into the church.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

University Senate to publish its policies and practices

United Methodist News Service

NORFOLK, Va.—The University Senate, the body that determines which colleges and universities may receive funding from The United Methodist Church, has approved publishing its operational guidelines, policies and review practices.

The guidelines were developed by the University Senate over the past several years.

Charles Fuget, University Senate member and Pennsylvania higher-education commissioner, heads the committee developing the guidelines.

The University Senate president, John W. White Jr., said that although the University Senate's composition and general responsibilities are outlined in the church's Book of Discipline, University Senate members need published procedures for reviewing and listing schools.

Printed criteria for evaluating schools are also needed, said Dr. White, president of Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln.

In other action, the panel approved the following historically black colleges for continued support from the denomination's Black College Fund:

Claflin College in Orangeburg, S.C.; Rust College in Holly Springs, Miss.; and Dillard University in New Orleans.

Historically black colleges related to the denomination are reviewed for funding every four years.

University Senate members also voted to continue the funding-approved listing of North Central College in Naperville, Ill., and Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington.

St. Paul United Methodist School, an elementary school in Tampa, will close this year because of declining enrollment, Dr. White said.

Most annual conferences resist changing homosexuality stand

By PAMELA SCHAEFFER
Religious News Service

In meetings across the country during May and June, United Methodists showed strong resistance to relaxing the denomination's approach to homosexuals.

Among the first 39 annual (regional) conferences reporting actions on the topic, all but eight urged that rules barring self-avowed practicing homosexuals from ministry be upheld.

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church excludes such persons from ordination. The church's Social Principles also describe the practice of homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching."

Despite pressure from gay and lesbian activists and their supporters in the denomination, annual conference members—lay and clergy—showed widespread sentiment for retaining that language in the church's official book of law.

However, a move to make the laws even more restrictive was defeated in West Virginia. Conference members there voted down a proposal to bar homosexuals from both baptism and church membership.

The United Methodist Church has approximately 9 million members in the U.S., making it one of the nation's second largest Protestant denominations.

"If this is truly the sinful life so many of you are claiming . . . by the hands of God may I die and be no more."

—Former minister James Hawk, after openly acknowledging his homosexual orientation

The denomination has 72 annual conferences in the U.S. All but five had filed reports on their meetings by the Reporter's press time. However, not all took action on the topic of homosexuality.

Tom McAnally, director of United Methodist News Service in Nashville, said the results of the regional votes on homosexuality are not surprising.

United Methodists historically have avoided extremes on controversial issues and consistently "taken the middle course," he said. They also tend to be "broadly representative" of the general outlook of the American populace, he said.

Nearly all annual conferences calling for less restrictive laws are situated on or near the nation's east and west coasts. Three of them—Pacific Northwest, Troy (portions of upstate New York and Vermont) and Southern New England—urged acceptance of committed relationships outside traditional marriage.

In the Western Pennsylvania conference, even a dramatic plea from a defrocked minister failed to convince conference members to vote for relaxing the rules.

The minister, James Hawk, 27, prayed aloud before a legislative committee of his conference, asking God to take his life if his sexual preference is contrary to divine law, as the church declares.

"If this is truly the sinful life so many of you are claiming . . . by the hands of God may I die and be no more," said Mr. Hawk, who has openly acknowledged his homosexual orientation.

Shortly before his public prayer, Mr. Hawk had been stripped of his ministerial credentials during an executive session of 780 clergy members.

As in Western Pennsylvania, conference members in most midwestern, southern and north central states were overwhelmingly in favor of retaining the church's present laws.

Some went even farther. The North Arkansas Annual Conference petitioned the General Conference to refuse further funds for study groups or task forces on homosexuality.

Conversely, the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference approved a statement of support for the work of a committee assigned to study homosexuality on behalf of the denomination.

The study panel, which was authorized by the 1988 General Conference, is to complete its work at a meeting in August. The report will be considered by the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

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Faith connections

BAPTISM STUDY: Readers of "Sacramental Life," the bimonthly magazine of the United Methodist-related Order of St. Luke, received an unexpected bonus in the July-August issue: the text of the proposed revised United Methodist understanding of baptism. The magazine's readers were invited to send their comments on the proposal to the General Board of Discipleship in advance of the study committee's final meeting in August in Minneapolis. The Rev. **Michael J. O'Donnell,** the magazine's editor, said the report was published with permission of the baptism study panel. The Order of St. Luke is a 45-year-old organization dedicated to sacramental and liturgical scholarship, education and practice.

PASTOR RETIRES: The pastor of America's oldest Methodist church in continuous service retired June 30 after 19 years in the historic pulpit. The Rev. **Robert L. Curry** was the 140th pastor of Historic Old St. George's United Methodist Church in Philadelphia. He completed 40 years of active ministry in the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference. The church, located near the city's Independence National Historical Park, has been in continuous service since Nov. 24, 1769, and was the site of the first three General Conferences of Methodism in America.

Robert L. Curry

OPERATION SUCCESS: Interest in the "Operation Classroom" mission education kit designed by Indiana United Methodists and publicized recently in the Reporter (see UMR, June 7) is so high that a free starter kit has been prepared. Write The Rev. **Joe Wagner,** P.O. Box 277, Colfax, Ind. 46035.

HISTORIC EVENTS: Three history-making events took place at the recent session of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. The conference heard a report from the Rev. **Thomas Roughface,** the first Native American to serve as conference council on ministries director since the conference was formed 148 years ago. In addition, the conference was presided over at various times by Methodist Bishop **Eugenio Poma,** a Bolivian Indian. Presiding Bishop **Dan E. Solomon** (Oklahoma Area) yielded the gavel to Bishop Poma. The conference also used a $160,000 trust fund to create the Indian Missionary United Methodist Foundation Inc. The foundation will underwrite the cost of maintaining conference headquarters in Oklahoma City.

LAY MINISTRY: Works by United Methodists are included in a new "Ministry of the Laity Bibliography of Resources" compiled by a consultant with the interdenominational Alban Institute in Washington. Among books listed are works by the Rev. **Ezra Earl Jones,** chief executive of the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship in Nashville; the Rev. **William H. Willimon** and **Stanley Hauerwas** of UM-related Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C.; and the Rev. Tex **Sample,** professor of Christian ethics at UM-related Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo. Copies are available from Dr. Edward White, The Alban Institute, 4125 Nebraska Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

Heartline links local church, AIDS patients

California ministry provides outreach, medical supplies, food, 'unselfish love'

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

REDONDO BEACH, Calif.—Saltiness peppers Sharon Savage's speech as she shares what's on her heart—namely, AIDS.

Her saltiness is born of impatience with those still doubting whether the church should join the battle against the deadly disease.

"What we need is more education in Church 101," says the lay leader (now in her sixth year) of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in this posh beach community.

"As church people we are supposed to be accepting of **all** people," she continues, weariness creasing her forehead.

Two gay men visit

AIDS got dumped into her lap—actually into the church's midsection—two years ago when two gay men, Jim and Joe, began cautiously visiting worship services.

After learning through private conversations that they could trust the pastor, the Rev. Jim Hamilton, they confided not only that they were homosexuals but that Joe had tested positive for ARC (AIDS-Related Complex, caused by the same virus that causes AIDS).

"God," she exclaims, recalling the impact, "Jim [Hamilton] didn't even know what ARC was. I didn't either. But he told our prayer and sharing group that we had to get some education.

"Did we ever! We put on a massive education campaign for our congregation—meeting after meeting after meeting."

Only two people—a husband and wife—left the 170-member congregation as it moved from education to action.

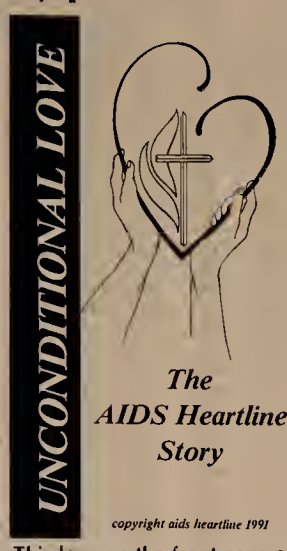
"They thought the program was wonderful," Sharon says. "They just weren't ready to deal with the disease."

The church basement, basically cluttered and unused, got a good scrubbing. Then it became what it is now—a food pantry and medical supply center for AIDS patients.

Heartline was born

The AIDS Heartline was born.

Saturdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., AIDS patients, friends and families come—many on referral from the county hospital—for supplies. Other churches, unready to enter the AIDS battle themselves, sponsor food drives for the Heartline pantry.



This logo on the front page of a flyer identifes the AIDS Heartline at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Redondo Beach, Calif.

But the church's AIDS Heartline reaches out as well as in.

Sharon, who finds "sanctity" in her job as a painter of custom tiles, has enough flexibility in her schedule to make herself available as a speaker to any church or civic group willing to learn more about AIDS.

"I always take someone with AIDS with me," she says. "It's interesting to watch how people react. Some won't sit near them. Others won't shake hands. There's a lot of ignorance about this disease."

She also has become something of a public advocate for AIDS patients' rights.

"That was part of the learning experience, too," she says, recalling the time she went to a public welfare office with an AIDS patient. "First we were frisked, as if we had something that might cause trouble. Then we had an eight-hour wait followed by a three-hour wait.

"These are sick people! They should be in bed, not having to spend all day in some government office just to apply for benefits they are eligible to receive."

Impatient though she may get with bureaucracy, it's nothing compared with how she feels about family members who reject an AIDS patient.

She told of one young man in his final hours who wanted nothing more than to talk with his mother on the phone. His mother refused.

"There he was all knotted up in a fetal position and he couldn't even hear his mother's voice."

So Sharon, the middle-aged mother of two, crawled into bed and held him close until he was gone.

Personal costs, too

Her tireless up-close-and-personal involvement has not been without its personal costs. Her brother wouldn't speak to her for months. Her son admitted he was afraid for her.

But the patients and the deaths kept coming.

"I got to the point that I said I couldn't handle one more death," she says on the 31-minute videotape the church has produced. "Then I told myself this is ridiculous, I have to suck that up and keep on doing. I have to deal with each one as they die and anticipate those to come."

The videotape, titled "Unconditional Love," tells how Jim and Joe came into the church's life in 1986 and how the AIDS Heartline evolved in November 1988.

In addition to medical and food supplies and a day room at the church, the Heartline helps arrange low-cost hotel accommodations (Sheraton was one of the first) for families from out of state and "emotional, spiritual and religious support when and where needed in addition to pastoral services when requested . . ."

What else is needed?

What else is needed?

Sharon Savage ticks off the list without hesitation:

1. Public service announcements to be aired on Los Angeles-area radio and television. Actor David Carradine has promised to do one for the AIDS Heartline. "Public education is needed just as it was in our church," she says.

2. Bilingual information about AIDS in Spanish and English, especially for young mothers and babies.

3. A hospice for AIDS patients.

4. Education in churches. "Any church that wants to help us or help itself needs to learn about this disease. And they need to be warned: There's no happy ending to this story—at least not yet."

Top-quality video tells story of how church created Heartline

Reporter Staff Special

REDLANDS, Calif.—Joe and Jim, two gay men, didn't make it to annual conference this year as they did last year—at least not in person.

But there were few dry eyes as the two appeared in a 31-minute videotape, "Unconditional Love," telling the story of the AIDS Heartline at 170-member St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Redondo Beach.

Next day, a ministerial member of the California-Pacific conference came by the St. Paul's Church booth in the conference's display area and told Heartline coordinator Sharon Savage, "You people have given me courage. My son is dying of AIDS, and I haven't even told my own congregation."

$60,000 value donated

Some $60,000 worth of donated time and materials helped produce a tape of near-broadcast quality. Producer Jim Whirlow, then a film and video staff member with nearby Hughes Aircraft Co. and now in private business, donated his services. Scriptwriters, music composers, narrators, tape editors, etc. donated theirs, too.

In *cinema verite'* style, the tape shows the church's Memorial Day service with 24 "lives they had touched," including AIDS victims, remembered via lighted candles. It shows women of the church producing an AIDS quilt, each "star" containing the name of an AIDS fatality, vacant stars awaiting names yet to come.

It also shows one St. Paul's member admitting her early concern about getting too close to AIDS, unsure about its contagiousness, especially because "we're a sharing, hugging, touching church."

Though Jim and Joe aren't the only ones featured—a young mother and her child, both AIDS patients, and a middle-aged mother who lost a son to the disease are among the others—they carry the film's main messages.

Jim Lyons says, "This disease is very expensive." As one who lost his job and insurance, he should know.

They also tell of emotional losses.

"This week we've lost three friends with AIDS," Joe Richardson says on the tape. "That's six this month."

Though the pastor, the Rev. Jim Hamilton, and Ms. Savage provide most of the tape's commentary, the final words belong to Jim and Joe.

'It was worth it'

"When I die," says Joe, speaking to Jim and to the camera, "I will know it was worth it. People who come after us won't have to be so scared. We made it easier for them.

"The legacy we are leaving is love—especially unselfish love. This church has shown us a lot of unselfish love."

The tape's closing credits tell part of the end of the story. Joe Richardson died of AIDS March 26, 1991. Now his star is on the quilt. Jim Lyons was too ill to go to conference.

Copies of "Unconditional Love" may be ordered for a $15 donation from St. Paul's UMC, 2600 Nelson Ave., Redondo Beach, Calif. 90278.

—*JOHN A. LOVELACE*

'Frontier missionaries' retire

UM News Service

Bob and Rosa Caufield consider themselves among the last of the "frontier missionaries."

For 36 years, the United Methodist couple worked in rural areas of Bolivia, literally carving schools and other mission projects out of the jungle.

They left the country in June—in preparation for retirement in February 1992—but not before Bolivia's Ministry of Education and Culture presented them with medals and a citation for their "service and spirit."

Rather than speak of sacrifice, the Caufields refer to "a rich and happy life and an excellent relationship with all our Bolivian counterparts."

The couple met at Birmingham Southern College, a United Methodist-related school in Alabama. On March 24, 1955, they were sent as missionaries to Latin America.

Methodist work started in Bolivia in the late 1800s. The Methodist Episcopal Church itself was organized there in the early part of the century, but for many years, government restrictions forced an emphasis on education rather than church growth. In 1969, the Annual Conference of Bolivia became the autonomous Evangelical Methodist Church in Bolivia.

The Caufields were particularly involved in rural education.

Over the years—in Montero, Alto Bena and Yucumo-Rio Colorado—they helped organize vocational high schools. Local congregations and other services, such as health-care clinics, also were formed.

At first, according to Bob Caufield, Protestants had a "pitched battle" with Roman Catholics in Bolivia. But after the Vatican I and II Councils, which supported ecumenical involvement, "working relationships were considerably improved," he said.

A Catholic priest even helped teach in the Methodist seminary at Montero, which Bob Caufield, a clergy member of the denomination's North Alabama Conference, ran for seven years.

The couple raised four children in Bolivia and never really considered another mission assignment.

"We never thought it would be very effective to move to another country . . . as long as the need was there," Rosa Caufield explained.

Even after they settle in Holly Pond, Ala., the Caufields intend to maintain their link with Brazil by itinerating and promoting the church's work there.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JOHN GOODWIN

Bob and Rosa Caufield discuss their 36 years as United Methodist missionaries in Bolivia.

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LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

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Church Extension: As Pastor of a New Congregation

This week's column is written by the Reverend Helena W. Wright, pastor of a new congregation sponsored by the Annual Conference's Board of Church Extension and Revitalization. Ms. Wright pastors Trinity United Methodist Church in Bunkie.

As I reflect on my call, preparation and first appointment to pastoral ministry, a feeling of joy overwhelms me.

God called me into pastoral ministry in 1986. I realized at that time that in order for me to be an effective pastor, preparation was necessary. Therefore, I enrolled at Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, and did a year of ministerial internship at Bethany United Methodist Church in New Orleans. I received Deacons' Orders at the 1989 Louisiana Annual Conference. I was awarded the Master of Divinity Degree in May of 1990. Less than a month later, at the Louisiana Annual Conference, Bisbop William B. Oden appointed me the organizing pastor of a new congregation in Bunkie.

I had never heard of Bunkie; however, knowing that God is everywhere, I moved without hesitation. I was happy because I had been offered a challenge and realized that witb faith in God it would be rewarding.

On a very hot June 8, 1990, I was welcomed into the Bunkie community by the congregations planning to merge. The loving Christians of Simpson United Methodist Church (established in 1880 in Eola), Marshall United Methodist Churcb (established in 1887 in Bunkie) and another small group of Methodists who lived in the community were very interested in forming a new congregation.

After an introductory devotional period, a nominating committee was elected and a date was set to officially merge, organize and name the new congregation. Four days later, June 12, 1990, our Organizational Cbarge Conference was held under the guidance of a warm, gentle, caring and capable man, the Reverend C. Richard Hoffpauir, Alexandria District Superintendent of the Louisiana Conference. The officers were elected and "Trinity" was chosen as the name of the newly formed congregation.

Our first worship service was held June 17, 1990, with forty members on roll. I was told that this was the first time in the history of Methodism that these Christians had a full-time pastor and plans to worship every Sunday. The excitement of the small congregation was contagious. Their determination to unite as the body of Christ was inspiring. As disciples of Christ, the members of Trinity used their gifts and grace to help make the church alive. At that first worship service the small choir sang fervently, the ushers saw that everyone was comfortable and the stewards assisted with the sacraments.

The Holy Spirit is moving through Bunkie. When Bisbop Oden preached an inspiring dedication sermon on October 28, 1990, the members had more than doubled. One year later our Charter Membership Roll closed with one-hundred members on June 12, 1991.

We are growing spiritually by sharing inspiring worship services, participating in an active Sunday Church School, Bible study, youth gatherings and taking advantage of tbe many resources available in the United Methodist Church on the District and Conference levels. We bave just completed a successful Vacation Bible School, directed by Mr. Lyman Hayes, with an average attendance of seventy-five.

We spend a lot of time in the facilities of Trinity, but our service is not confined to its buildings and its members. We are an outreach church. We visit hospitals, schools and shut-ins. We are Christ centered in word and deed. Our thrust is to minister to the whole person: meeting the spiritual as well as the physical, emotional and social needs.

Therefore, we serve the church and the community in various ways. For example, once a month, co-operating with other ministers and the Central Louisiana Food Bank, our facilities are used to distribute food to the needy. We also provide clothing and offer senior citizens of the community free visual evaluations. Our facilities are also used for many social, civic and family group gatherings.

As a servant of the community, I am an active member of the Avoyelles Interfaith Ministers Association, City of Bunkie Citizen Advisory Committee and the Chapel Committee of Bunkie General Hospital.

As I continue to reflect on the organization of Trinity United Methodist Church, I thank God for giving wisdom to our Bishop and the Cabinet, the Board of Church Extension and Revitalization, the Board of Global Ministries, the 1000 Club, the District Superintendent of Alexandria and all other praying Cbristians everywhere for helping to make a vision a reality.

By God's grace, Trinity United Methodist in Bunkie has made a difference in the community. As God's servant, it has been inspiring, challenging and rewarding for me. However, I am mindful to always give God the glory for using me in a small way to be His servant. I will continue to help lift the quality of life for all humanity; pointing them into the direction of salvation as long as I live through words and deeds.

Helena W. Wright

Local Project Receives National Grant to Further Its Work in Migrant Ministry

The Migrant Ministry of Memorial United Methodist Church in Monroe, has recently received a grant from the 1990 Assembly Offering of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The South Central Jurisdiction Core Planning Group of United Methodist Women was the review body which made the grant.

The Assembly of United Methodist Women, which took place in Kansas City, Missouri, in May of 1990, received the offering from the 10,100 women present. Others from across the United States also contributed during the year. The total offering was $277,590.84.

The money was designated for projects dealing with children and youth. Memorial Church's Migrant Ministry is among the 43 grant recipients in the South Central Jurisdiction. Projects varied in nature, size, and church affiliation.

The Reverend Rick Meek (left), pastor of Memorial is shown with Mrs. Carol Collins Taylor, as she presents the grant check to Dr. Jason Johnson, Church Treasurer.

Memorial's Ministry to migrant children is designed to provide basic dental care and emergency dental and visual care for migratory children residing in Ouachita Parish. Church volunteers transport the children between their homes and participating dentists. Dentists who have been asked by church members to enroll in this project give dental cleaning and screening services at no charge. Grant funds are then used for more extensive emergency dental care, such as extractions, fillings, or for eyeglasses when a migrant child is found to have a visual impairment.

The migrant child health care project was begun last year at Memorial with members paying for all costs of dental cleaning as well as transporting the children to and from home or school. The grant has allowed the church's ministry to provide more extensive health care to children who historically have little or none.

Incorporated into project plans is a study on missions for children in the Church, and an inter-cultural supper to include migrant families presently living in the parish.

Town and Country Ministries Meets in August

The South Central Jurisdictional Consultation on Town and Country Ministries will take place August 13-14, 1991, in Fort Worth, Texas. "The Stability of the Town and Rural Church in a Changing and Complex World" is the theme for the upcoming event.

The purpose of the two-day event is to address issues such as evangelism, missions, worship, goal setting and motivation throughout the local church, and also to provide practical suggestions that town and rural churches can use to impact their communities. The focus of the consultation will be to lift up the uniqueness and the importance of ministry than can occur in rural and town areas.

Plenary session leaders include: Dr. Chester Jones, pastor, Little Rock, Arkansas; Dr. Ed Otwell, Director of Church Growth and Development, Central Texas Conference; and Dr. William Cotton, District Superintendent, Des Moines, Iowa. There will be five workshops offered in three separate sessions.

The consultation will be held at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth with housing and meals on campus. The event is co-sponsored by Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, and the South Central Jurisdiction Council on Ministries. Dr. Royce Riley is the chairperson of the planning committee.

Brochures and additional information may be obtained from the office of the South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228, 214-321-7077.

Criminal Justice Ministries Important to United Methodists

In 1988, the General Conference responded to the plea from church members and prison chaplains for greater awareness and involvement of the Church in prison ministries. Out of that need, the General Conference mandated that the Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries of the United Methodist Church (CJAMM) be organized and implemented throughout the Annual Conferences, Districts, local churches and the Jurisdiction.

The general purpose of the CJAMM is "to encourage Annual Conferences to be intentional and organized for Criminal Justice Ministries." The structuring of a network of United Methodists involved in prison ministry and reform will serve as a way for interested persons to share information, ideas and inspiration with one another. This network would include UM chaplains, Conference staff, UM committees, UM prison officials and any other United Methodist involved in such work.

Implementation of the CJAMM will result in training clergy and laity for this work, developing resource centers about existing programs, creating interdenominational agencies and channels to undergird these efforts and collecting and developing papers on the theological perspectives and methods of justice issues, redemptive fellowship, preventive pathways, etc. Overall, the goal of the CJAMM is "to get church people into prisons [as volunteers or paid helpers] and prisoners into churches [while helping] the United Methodist Church play its important tole."

To that end, representatives from various church agencies and Conferences are invited to the United Methodist Conference on Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries workshop on September 13-15, 1991, at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. Participants will be encouraged to get to know one another better, to share models for ministry and to discover efficient ways to implement the CJAMM into local congregations.

Cost for the event is $100 per person which includes registration, two nights lodging and six meals. Registrations must be mailed to Intentional Growth Center, Box 546, Lake Junaluska, N.C. 28745. Questions should be addressed to: Dr. Jerry D. Murray, Director, CJAMM, 1001 Reynolda Road, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27104; 919-377-9864.

Persons — Churches — Events

Mount Zion UMC in New Orleans recently celebrated "The Gathering" on June 22. The event, wbich was inspired by the "Louisiana Gathering" held in March, took place at Dillard University. The theme for the celebration was "It's Harvest Time — Mount Zion." The guest preacher for the occasion was Dr. Cornelius Linton Henderson, District Superintendent of the Atlanta Emory District, North Georgia Conference and former pastor of the Ben Hill UMC in Atlanta. Lay speaker for the event was Mr. Wadsworth A. Davis, Lay Leader of Mount Zion. The program was designed to depict some of the innovative forms of worship such as liturgical dance by children and youth and a festival of banners. Chairperson of "The Gathering" was Mrs. Dorothy Mae Taylor and co-chair was Ms. Debra Moran Vanderhost. On May 26, the church celebrated its annual Festiv-all at the Bayou Plaza Hotel. The theme used was "Jubilee: A Celebration of Music and the Arts." Proceeds for the project, which was chaired by Mrs. Adele Knatt, will benefit the church's building fund. The Reverend Leslie P. Norris is pastor of Mount Zion.

* * *

Senior citizens residing in the 28 Shreveport and Bossier City retirement centers and nursing homes were treated to the Seventeenth Annual Ice Cream Social at **Broadmoor UMC in Shreveport** May 14. Along with ice cream and homemade cookies, the entertainment was provided by the AT&T Clowns, under the direction of Janet Hyatt. The Reverend Dwight D. Ramsey is pastor of Broadmoor.

* * *

Carrollton UMC in New Orleans, has joined with four Carrollton Avenue Churches to hold their first ecumenical Vacation Bible School August 5 through 9 from 9 a.m. until 12 noon. The other churches are Carrollton Presbyterian, St. Andrew's Episcopal and St. Matthew Church of Christ. The school will be held at St. Matthew United Church of Christ. Children ages three through sixth grade are welcome. Final date to register is July 14.

Heifer Project International, good neighbor of the world, has been selected for the free-will offering to increase public understanding of the world's hunger problems. The Reverend Leland D. Wade is pastor of Carrollton UMC.

In Memoriam

The Reverend Albert A. Collins, retired minister, died June 4, 1991. Mr. Collins, who is survived by his wife Lenora, was 80 at the time of his death.

Around the Conference

The Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital Auxiliary announces the installation of new officers. Pictured are l. to r., Mrs. Howard Keefe, First Vice President; Mrs. Vincent Clisham, President; Mr. John Eagan, Treasurer; Mrs. M.S. Lynch, Recording Secretary; and Mrs. Leslie Hightower, Corresponding Secretary. Not pictured are Mrs. Wallace Dick, Second Vice President; and Mrs. Thomas Giraud, Immediate Past President.

A major conference ended very successfully with the agreement that they will work hard on local problems. The 1990 Dillard University Conference on Black-Jewish Relations, held on the University's campus, was the first of its kind to concentrate on creating a Black-Jewish coalition to work on problems rather than focus on other issues. Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook, president of the university, (center) is shown with the Rev. Charles R. Stith, Senior Pastor of Union UMC in Boston (left), and Rabbi Robert J. Marx, Congregation Hakafa in Glencoe, Illinois.

The Chancel Choir of Noel Memorial UMC, Shreveport, recently held its Music Appreciation Banquet. This is an annual event held to express appreciation to all those youth and adults who participate in the music program of the church. Pictured are three persons who have been members of the Noel Chancel Choir for more than 50 years. Pictured are l. to r., Mrs. Robert (Harriett) Middleton, Mr. Harbin Boddie and Mr. Don McLeod.

Editorial

Lawsuit against Scouts poses threat to religion

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.
—Boy Scout Oath

The first drawing of a Boy Scout by Scouting's founder, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, shows a youth making his way through a wilderness. Scouting's insistence that such a thing as "duty to God" exists provides a needed voice in the wilderness of contemporary life.

Strike two words—"... God and ..."—from this oath and what would you have left?

You would have the desired result of an atheist family in California that has filed suit against the Boy Scouts of America for requiring a profession of "duty to God" as a condition of membership.

An immediate temptation is to dismiss such an action as ludicrous. After all, we might reason, Scouting is a private, voluntary association protected by the First Amendment. With few exceptions, courts have refused to define religious membership standards for private organizations.

Those filing the suit, however, claim that the Boy Scouts are not a private organization with a right to set membership standards on religious grounds. "They're public; and if they're public, they can't exclude people who don't believe in God," says one of the 9-year-old plaintiffs.

Heaven help us if the courts should buy that contention and accept jurisdiction over such a case. A seeming nuisance suit suddenly could pose an ominous threat to freedom of religious expression in this country.

Given the vast civic and social good that churches do, could not they likewise be declared "public organizations"?

Like members in churches and many other private organizations with religious purposes, people seek membership in the Boy Scouts by their own choice.

If the courts could dictate that "duty to God" be removed as a membership standard for the Boy Scouts, what would keep them from similarly seeking to deny the right of a church to require belief in God for membership?

Such possibilities once were unthinkable. But they can no longer be so regarded in our increasingly secular society.

Thomas Jefferson wisely taught that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

In this case, vigilance means supporting the Boy Scouts' right to require a pledge of "duty to God." Their related requirement that members pledge to lead a "morally straight" life is a needed voice in the wilderness.

As Christians, we not only should support the Boy Scouts of America as it defends itself against an attempt to silence that voice.

We also should encourage appropriate national denominational and ecumenical agencies to file "friend of the court" briefs in support of Scouting's right to define its purposes and membership standards.

Here I Stand

Are denominations obsolete?

By RANDALL BALMER

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Randall Balmer is associate professor of religion at Barnard College/Columbia University in New York.

The religious denomination, that peculiar institution born of American religious pluralism, may be fading. Consider the evidence.

Several of the mainline denominations face severe financial shortfalls.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must cut $5.2 million from its 1991 budget after running deficits the three previous years.

Anticipating a leveling off of revenues, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has imposed a freeze on hiring and foreclosed the possibility of new programs for the next several years.

The Episcopalians are finding that more money taken in at the local level remains in the parishes rather than transferred to the national leadership.

The denominations' difficulties, however, extend well beyond finances. Perhaps the greatest insult to the leadership of the various denominations is that, put simply, no one is paying attention.

The ecumenical movement of the past quarter century has tended to blur the theological distinctions that once made one denomination different from another. As mainline traditions have sought to cooperate with one another, attention to theological niceties has diminished.

Robert Wuthnow, a sociologist at Princeton University, has charted a phenomenon that he calls "denomination switching."

Denominational loyalty, roughly akin to brand loyalty that a consumer exercises when buying shampoo or laundry detergent, has all but disappeared since World War II, Mr. Wuthnow argues.

When a family moves to a new town or a new neighborhood, its choice of a church has less to do with denominational affiliation than with the merits of one local congregation relative to others.

Denominations have also become too large and their bureaucracies too remote from the people they are supposed to serve. For instance, how can the leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention hope to placate its large and diverse constituency, even in the South where, according to the old saw, there are more Southern Baptists than there are people?

The real explanation for the quandary facing mainline denominations, I think, is simply that the institution itself is a cultural dinosaur.

Denominations in America, even in traditions with bishops, have no real power. Whereas denominations once enforced discipline within their ranks or at the very least delineated differences in doctrine or worship, they now merely perpetuate themselves through the publication of educational materials or the release of policy statements that are often ignored, even within their own ranks.

In a culture fixated with celebrity and susceptible to the cult of personality, religious loyalties rest more often with a local minister or parish than with a distant denominational apparatus. Church members are more likely to identify with a pastor than to follow the pronouncements of some bureaucrat.

Indeed, some of the largest and fastest-growing congregations stubbornly refuse to affiliate themselves with denominations; others are growing restive within their denominations.

"This church is so big," a pastor of a large midwestern congregation told me last fall, "that we don't need a denomination."

Where does all this leave the denominational executives?

I expect that we'll see further retrenchments in the coming years, although it would be premature to sound the death knell. Institutions, after all, even those that have outlived their usefulness, are inordinately durable.

Letters to the Editor

We need to deal with present, not past, on abortion issue

Steven Paul Wissler may be director of the unofficial Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality, but his leadership on such a crucial matter at a crucial time in its history leaves much to be desired.

His June 28 "Here I Stand" article misses the point by battling the 1970 and 1972 General Conference actions on abortion. If the actions then were "sloppy," so too is his look at today's needs.

1991 has given us a whole new world of facts and concerns for this central question on today's agenda for the church. New thought, not old, is called for.

Often, unwise marriages are insisted upon and are doomed from the start. For poor teens, particularly, the choices are even more limited and society faces years of costs for welfare resulting in children, often drug-addicted or infected with AIDS, who are unable to find adequate homes or loving care. Does this make sense?

How much more helpful it would be if the best in professional counseling, both in methods of contraception and in family planning, were available to all. The cost in both money and our social structure would be far less.

Clark Robbins
Rancho Palos Verdes, California

We need to pay attention

United Methodists, I hope we are paying attention to the recent news concerning our fellow denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

I refer to the schism that is developing in that denomination over the human sexuality report produced by a church study committee.

Also, witness the split that has occurred in Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas, the largest Presbyterian church in Texas and one of the most influential and powerful in the denomination.

More than half of its members recently voted to withdraw from the denomination because of the report, the result of which was a division in the church, with many members leaving to form a new congregation.

I urge our church leaders to pay attention. There is a sleeping giant of conservative, evangelical Christians in our denomination who, like many of our Presbyterian brothers and sisters, will no longer tolerate continued assaults upon the fundamentals of our faith.

Specifically, I refer to the recommendations of the homosexuality study committee. If these recommendations become a part of the Book of Discipline, I predict that there will be a rebellion within the ranks of the members of our great denomination that will split the church in two.

Pray that such a division never comes and that we will remain faithful to the truth as it is embodied in Scripture and our Wesleyan heritage.

Ralph H. Walton, Jr.
Granbury, Texas

Women 'wagging dog'?

In response to the June 21 Faith-Line responses regarding the proposal to move the General Board of Global Ministries from New York City, I couldn't help but notice that without exception the people opposed to any move were women.

I am presumptuous enough to suppose that they are all somehow related to that tail that does a first-rate job of wagging the dog—the Women's Division of the mission board, which refuses to play unless it has its way.

I can't say I'm surprised. Only the United Methodist Church and the Democratic Party insist upon the quota system, and both institutions are dying—in part as a result of that folly. God help us, "and that right early."

Dean Roberts
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

My Witness

Closing a church feeds feelings of failure

By JAMES E. SISK JR.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. James E. Sisk Jr. is pastor of the Church of the Good Shepherd in North Baltimore, Ohio (West Ohio Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275. Reprinted with permission by the West Ohio Conference edition of The United Methodist Review.

It was late June, the afternoon, and very hot. Some of us had come from far away; some from nearby.

Some said we had come to celebrate; some said to mourn. Fanning ourselves, we sat waiting for the service to begin.

This would be the last—the very last—service held in Bloomdale North Main United Methodist Church. The church was closing. It didn't have enough to keep going: not enough people, not enough money, not enough time. Not enough.

"Not an easy decision, the decision to close a church," I thought as I sat there for the first and last time. "How do you bring yourself to vote for closing your church? Where do the people go?"

The people must have voted with deep concern. There was concern for those who started Bloomdale North Main in 1892.

There was concern for a sense of loss; concern for their families' needs to belong; concern that there simply was not enough. They faced inescapably painful facts. Forty-nine members (10 outside their community), one homebound, average attendance of 15 to 20. The vote was 15 to two for closing.

Ironically, "Churches Do Not Die" was the last sermon heard in Bloomdale North Main. It was preached by the district superintendent.

"Who will bury us?" he asked, bringing to focus the key issue in church closings: Failure. Was there failure? Can there be a reason other than failure for closing a church?

When something comes to an end, do we always need to think only of failure? Could it be that the people who voted to close the church had not failed? Could it be that they had not failed their ancestors, their parents, their children or themselves—or God?

What they did with fear and trembling and tears and prayer was what they believed God had called them to do.

Bloomdale North Main members requested that the parsonage be sold and the money given to the denomination's pension fund. They made available the tables, chairs, pianos, organ, pulpit furniture and other furnishings to other churches.

These items will continue to serve other congregations. We who are in churches where the doors will be open next Sunday morning may find it hard to understand what led to Bloomdale North Main's closing. We will pity, ponder, muse and pray.

If the direst predictions are accurate, some of us will have to understand.

What others are saying

"The task of proclaiming the Gospel into the 21st century is to lead the rebellion against suffering by remembering the suffering of the past."
—The Rev. Thomas Troeger, professor of preaching and communication, Iliff School of Theology, Denver.

* * *

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."
—The Rev. Zan Holmes, United Methodist minister, Dallas, Texas.

* * *

"Our society is in an addiction crisis. Whether the tools for our addiction are drugs or alcohol, food or work, rage or relationships, caffeine or cigarettes, money or power, sex or jogging, the reality is that we are looking for false idols to fix our lives. ... In the midst of our pain, the profound wisdom of Jesus Christ calls out to us. Once our idols are named and claimed, Christ can begin His work in us."
—The Rev. Sue Owen-Bofferding, Oregon-Idaho Conference Task Force on Addiction (United Methodist Church).

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live." (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: 1 Corinthians 3:9)

Readings for week of July 15

Monday: Psalms 132:1-10
Tuesday: Psalms 132:11-18
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 7:18-29
Thursday: Mark 6:1-6
Friday: Mark 6:7-13
Saturday: Ephesians 1:1-10
Sunday: Ephesians 1:11-14

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Faith watch

UM PASTOR SPEAKS OUT: As the temperature rose in Los Angeles last week, so did tempers. Black leaders there worry that riots may follow in neighborhoods across the country if police charged in the videotaped beating of motorist Rodney King seem to get off too lightly. The Rev. **James M. Lawson Jr.**, pastor of Holman United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, said there is "real anger, frustration and tension." He added, "I don't know how many people in my congregation believe the courts or the [police brutality] commission will produce significant decisions for hope. I certainly don't."

James Lawson

TWO CHURCHES DAMAGED: At least two United Methodist churches in Pasadena, Calif., sustained structural and cosmetic damages during a June 28 earthquake. No United Methodists were reported injured. Early estimates of damages to Pasadena First United Methodist Church and Holliston United Methodist Church total more than $400,000. The earthquake was the largest since October 1987.

NEW HOME: Cornerstone-laying services were held July 7 in New York City's upper west side for a new $10 million home for two United Methodist congregations—one Spanish speaking, the other English. Grace UMC's congregations lost their home nearly eight years ago in a 5-alarm fire. Adjoining the new church will be a 10-story, 68-unit apartment building that will include two 3-bedroom parsonage units and 56 rental units. The United Methodist City Society, a mission agency founded in 1838, helped arrange the building project.

POLISH BAPTISTS CRY 'FOUL!': Baptist leaders in Poland are upset about delays in the return of their dozen church properties by the Polish government.

NCC LEADER SERVES: In what is believed to be a first, the Rev. **Leonid Kishkovsky**, president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., is serving on the U.S. delegation to the Helsinki accord discussions July 1-19 in Geneva. Mr. Kishkovsky said he is pleased to serve on the delegation because churches have often found it difficult to press their concerns with U.S. delegations to Helsinki conferences. The Helsinki accords were signed in 1975 by 33 European nations, the United States and Canada for the purpose of joint cooperation in areas such as disarmament, economics and human rights. The July meeting focuses on national ethnic and racial minority groups.

Leonid Kishkovsky

Compiled from news and staff reports

'Best-kept secret' puts out word on mission

Volunteers-in-Mission conference shares stories and training for short-term projects

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—You say you want to serve in Christ's mission field but have only a few weeks to spare?

You may be a candidate for Volunteers-in-Mission.

Some 350 veterans of the volunteer-mission field swapped travel stories, collected ideas for mission projects and trained for short-term mission service during the recent 12th annual Volunteers-in-Mission Rally at Lake Junaluska Assembly.

The Rev. Thomas L. Curtis, director of the church's nine-state Southeastern Jurisdiction Volunteers-in-Mission office for the past 12 years, said, "This program is one of the best kept secrets in the United Methodist Church.

"This has tremendous grass-roots opportunities because the local United Methodist decides when and where he or she wants to go," he said.

Not only did United Methodists come from annual conferences in the Southeast where the conference was held, they came from as far as Minnesota, Missouri, Texas, New York, Iowa and Ohio. All gathered ideas to take home to their local churches.

Highlighting the meeting were presentations by leaders from autonomous Methodist churches in Panama, Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Uruguay, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Belize, Honduras, the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean and Zimbabwe.

William Rollins, staff executive for the national Volunteers-in-Mission office at the General Board of Global Ministries, estimates that, nationally, some 18,000 United Methodists participated in individual or team-related volunteer mission projects in 1990. Work was done in the U.S. and some 40 other countries.

The focus of this year's meeting was mission evangelism and cross-cultural orientation, emphasizing "how to be effective rather than intrusive."

Workshops discussed how to train mission teams, prepare for construction and assist the host church in evangelism.

During a keynote address on mission evangelism, the Rev. Wycherley V. Gumbs, chairman and general superintendent of the Leeward Islands District of the Methodist Church of the Americas and the Caribbean, said there are two pitfalls volunteers should try to avoid when answering a call to mission:

1. "Watch **the arrogance of power.**"

"You are a big country. You embrace us under your armpits. The battles you have won in the Persian Gulf may make you feel arrogant. But you are different, indeed, because you have caught the spirit."

2. "**Watch the power of your culture.**"

Dr. Gumbs said that years ago, the perception of missions was to send money and the Gospel "over there."

"Remember, from the outset, you go to be partners with your fellow Christian. You come not to do our work but to do God's work."

Dr. Gumbs said one man asked him, "Why couldn't we just send money and stay home?"

"I said, 'You can keep your money. We need **you.**' Some people think missionaries always bring and give and that missionaries don't receive. That's a fallacy.

"Our hands are outstretched to give to you."

Volunteer serves Christ with 3,700 toothbrushes

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Linda Fields can't wait to tell how she spent two weeks on a beautiful island in the sun—teaching 3,700 school children and their teachers how to brush their teeth!

That's just one heartwarming story told by Mrs. Fields during the United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission Rally last month.

Sharing 'love in action'

As part of the meeting, about 50 physicians, dentists and allied health personnel spent hours sharing experiences of "Christian love in action" with members of the Volunteers-in-Mission medical fellowship.

Mrs. Fields and her husband, Dr. James P. Fields, members of Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville, presented a slide show on a March mission trip to Saint Vincent, West Indies.

Their 24-member team included a pediatrician, a family practitioner, a dermatologist/allergist, two anesthesiologists, a general surgeon, an optometrist, a pharmacist, two dentists, a dental hygienist, seven nurses, a director of Christian education/medical assistant, a commercial artist, and three laypeople—all ready to give two weeks as short-term missionaries.

Mrs. Fields beams with pride when she says team members came not just from the southeast but from three United Methodist jurisdictional areas: Boston (Northeastern); Glencoe, Minn. (North Central); Birmingham, Ala., Laurel, Miss., and small towns and large cities in Kentucky and Tennessee (Southeastern).

Each individual on a mission project of the size she described raises about $1,000 for the trip. The rest of the budget of $35,000 comes from individual team members, Sunday School classes, United Methodist Women, and other church groups.

She told the Reporter that a medical mission trip takes months of preparation. With the help of friends, Dr. and Mrs. Fields packed 195 boxes, crates and foot lockers—total weight: 6,135 pounds—and sent them ahead of the team to Saint Vincent at a transportation cost of $5,000.

"My house will never be on the tour of homes in Nashville, because our living room is always filled with boxes of medical supplies we collect for our mission trips," said Mrs. Fields, laughing.

PHOTO BY LINDA FIELDS

SAINT VINCENT, West Indies—New toothbrushes in hand, some of the 3,700 children who received fluoride treatments from United Methodist volunteers-in-mission James and Linda Fields practice newly learned toothbrushing techniques.

114 operations performed

During the mission trip to Saint Vincent, the surgical component of the team operated in a tiny hospital in Georgetown where surgery had never been performed until three years ago. That was when a general surgeon was added to the team.

This year the surgeon performed 114 operations.

The ophthalmologist, using an operating microscope and assisted by an ophthalmic nurse, performed 43 procedures, including 18 cataract removals with lens implants.

"To hear a man who was blind shout praises to God when his sight is restored is indeed a moving experience," said Mrs. Fields.

Dr. and Mrs. Fields told the VIM medical fellowship that other medical and dental team members, traveling by van to different villages on Saint Vincent:

- Performed 63 minor surgical procedures;
- Extracted 858 teeth;
- Fit 1,016 pairs of eyeglasses.

In all, the team treated about 7,044 patients. Mrs. Fields said she estimates they spent $3.27 per person in cost of treatment.

Mrs. Fields, said, "We were told by a church steward at Georgetown Methodist Church in St. Vincent, 'You came not only to heal the sick but to show us how to love the unlovely.' "

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Layman combats 'legal child abuse' with mediation video

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Is there such a thing as "legal child abuse"?

A United Methodist layman—a state district judge since 1984—says the answer is "yes" and that it happens in courtrooms every day.

Judge Merrill Hartman of Dallas has done something about it and received national acclaim in the process.

Merrill Hartman

He said that while hearing child custody suits, he became disturbed about damage such cases did to the children. He calls custody battles a form of "legal child abuse."

Requires mediation

He started requiring mediation as a peaceful way for divorcing parents to come to an agreement on "who gets the children."

Judge Hartman also conceived the idea for a video subsequently produced and titled "Don't Forget the Children" (see details at end of this story).

The video is shown to divorcing parents to help them understand how badly children are hurt by a custody battle, the judge said.

The video includes moving testimony by families who worked through their problems via mediation.

It also includes crayon drawings by children caught up in custody fights.

One 8-year-old girl drew the parents outside of the house and herself alone in the attic.

"This is me," she says on the video, "up here in the dark."

Life-changing experience

The video was played at the American Bar Association and won the American Bar Endowment Award for the Outstanding Public Service Project in 1989. It is now used in 22 states.

Judge Hartman told the Reporter that the video was just one result of a life-changing experience that happened in a Washington hotel room in 1975. A corporate lawyer at the time, he had not been active in a church for 13 years.

He had been traveling on business for a protracted period when, on short notice, he was placed in charge of a team of lawyers working on a $22 million anti-trust divestiture suit that took him to Washington.

Battling difficulties, time and fatigue, he "hit the wall," he said.

"All I was trusting up to that point was me," he said, "and I had learned that there was nothing left to trust."

Not liking any of the options he could think of—quit, get drunk, jump out of the window—he noticed a Gideon Bible in his hotel room.

"I hadn't had a Bible in my hands in years," he said.

He doesn't remember which passage he read, but the effect was "Don't worry, because I am God. I am in control. Trust me."

The next day, he said, he had all the problems he had before but he had the confidence to start again.

"I read the Bible every morning and evening and I found that I was trusting God with the outcome from that day forward."

And, yes, he won the case.

He continued Bible study and he and his family joined Lake Highlands United Methodist Church in Dallas where he taught Sunday school.

'Love your fellow man'

In Sunday school, "I had to start announcing what I thought the Bible meant. And I thought it meant just what it said: 'Love your fellow man.' "

However, it wasn't until Judge Hartman went to Puerto Rico on a legal case in 1982 that his eyes were opened, he said. While he was walking along a beach, the sight of impoverished children struck his conscience forcibly.

"I realized I wasn't practicing what I was preaching," he said.

He returned to Dallas and, with the help of another member of his congregation—Will Pryor, now assistant attorney general of Texas—opened a free legal clinic that operated one night a week in one of Dallas' poorest areas.

The idea spread. Other lawyers and legal professionals joined in until, in 1990, 1,500 lawyers and legal assistants gave 50,000 hours of legal services to the poor of Dallas County, he said.

"This is me, up here in the dark" is the message of the 8-year-old girl who drew this portrait of her divorcing parents caught up in a child custody battle.

For more information on "Don't Forget the Children," write to Mark Bayer, Gardere and Wynne, 1500 Maxus Energy Tower, 717 N. Harwood, Dallas, Texas 75201 or call 214-979-4500. $21.60 to non-profit organizations, $32.50 to others.

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Denver selected as site for 1996 General Conference

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

DENVER—As planning for the 1992 meeting of United Methodism's top legislative assembly in Louisville, Ky., neared completion recently, Denver was chosen as the site of the 1996 session.

The 1996 sessions in Colorado's capital city will mark the first meeting of the General Conference in the Western Jurisdiction since Portland, Ore., in 1976.

The decision by the Commission on the General Conference to accept the invitation from Bishop Roy I. Sano on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Conference was unanimous, subject to negotiating agreements with Denver hotels.

The Colorado Convention Center, opened in 1990, will house the April 23-May 3, 1996 meeting.

With the 1996 site selection completed, details were finalized for the 1992 conference.

The 1992 General Conference will open at 1:30 p.m. May 5 in Louisville's Commonwealth Convention Center with a service of Holy Communion. Final adjournment is scheduled for 10 p.m. May 15.

Virtually all 11 days will be devoted to business for the 998 delegates from United Methodist annual conferences in the United States, Puerto Rico, Africa, Europe and the Philippines. Voting representatives from Methodist churches of the Caribbean and the Americas, Great Britain and Mexico will be present, along with observers from a number of affiliated autonomous churches.

The traditional "state of the church" Episcopal Address will be given at 8:15 p.m. May 5 by Bishop C. Dale White of White Plains, N.Y. The Laity Address at 9 a.m. May 6 will be presented by a person yet to be named.

The 1992 General Conference is budgeted at $3.1 million.

The Rev. DeWayne S. Woodring of Indianapolis, executive director and business manager of the conference, estimated that it will be worth $9 million to the Louisville economy, based on nationally accepted projections for daily expenditures by delegates, staff and visitors.

Faith connections

BOOKS FOR U.S.S.R.: Aid for Soviet Christians continues to draw the interest of United Methodists. Nearly 18 months ago the Rev. **Randall J. Cirksena Jr.** of Fuquay-Varina, N.C., obtained a set of the works of St. John Chrysostom—printed in the Soviet Georgian language—from a monastery in Jordanville, N.Y. With the American Bible Society helping with shipment, he paid $1,200 to have the volumes shipped to the Georgian Orthodox Seminary in Bethania late last year. At the society's suggestion to ensure delivery, the books were sent as a gift from Bishop **L. Bevel Jones III** (Charlotte Area) to the seminary dean. Mr. Cirksena's efforts sparked the General Board of Global Ministries to establish a churchwide project to send theological books, in Russian, to the Soviet Union. Contributions to this cause may be sent through conference treasurers and designated for **Advance Special No. 010906-4 A-N.**

WOMEN LEADERS: Three United Methodist clergywomen have assumed top leadership positions in a newly formed Delaware organization, Clergy for Life. Elected were the Rev. **Connie Roland Metzger,** president; the Rev. **Janet M. Harmon,** vice president; and the Rev. **Marlene L. Walters,** secretary. About 60 Delaware clergy of various denominations are associated with the organization, which was formed to provide a network for pro-life clergy to advocate for the respect and protection of human life.

PRESIDENT NAMED: **David G. Ruffer,** currently president of United Methodist-related Albright College in Reading, Pa., has been named president of the University of Tampa. Because he will no longer be chief executive of a United Methodist-related school, he has resigned from the University Senate, the body which determines which colleges and universities are eligible to receive funding from The United Methodist Church. University Senate members are elected every four years by the General Conference.

RESEARCH GRANT: The Lilly Endowment has awarded a grant of $637,716 to United Methodist-related Candler School of Theology of Emory University for a three-year research program on the faith and practices of Christian congregations. The Rev. **Thomas E. Frank,** assistant professor of congregational life, and director of the Rollins Center for church ministries, will direct the study.

CORRECTION: The Rev. **Thomas Roughface** is the first Native American conference superintendent in the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference since its founding 148 years ago, not its first council on ministries director as reported July 5.

Share-the-cost evangelism plan takes off

'50-50' pilot project in Holston conference exceeds Foundation for Evangelism hopes

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—A new 50-50 national/regional sharing plan may get United Methodist congregations more excited about evangelism.

The plan is actually an expansion of one initiated by the national United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism.

Last year, retired Bishop Earl G. Hunt Jr., the foundation's president, reported that a fund-raising program called "The 70" was expanding to combine efforts of the foundation with those of annual conferences.

Earl Hunt

Curtis Schofield

In the expanded program, annual conferences are asked to allow the foundation to solicit $1,000 from each of 70 United Methodists—lay and clergy—within the given conference's bounds.

Half the money raised will go to the foundation's endowment. The other half will be escrowed by the foundation for use within the annual conference from which it came.

The Holston Annual Conference, whose borders more or less follow the Holston River through southwest Virginia and northeastern Tennessee, agreed to serve as a pilot project.

The foundation's executive committee at its June 20-21 meeting learned how well the project had succeeded.

Seventy-eight persons from the Holston conference have agreed to contribute $1,000 each to the "AC 70" pilot project for 1992. Bishop Hunt said this project "has produced more than that conference has had to spend for evangelism programs in any other year of its history.

"As soon as the annual conference designs a program in evangelism which satisfies guidelines of the foundation and the Section on Evangelism of the General Board of Discipleship, the money will be released," said the bishop.

During an interview at the foundation's headquarters at Lake Junaluska, the Rev. Curtis Schofield, foundation vice-president for development, said, "We want to get grassroots United Methodists and local churches excited about evangelism. The way to do that is through annual conferences.

"If half the money goes to the foundation's endowment and half goes to the annual conference, we're in a win-win situation."

Although the foundation is based in the Southeast, the 50-50 sharing program is being expanded. Dr. Schofield has met with officials in both the Iowa and North Arkansas annual conferences and said they indicated readiness to enter the plan.

Foundation to fund evangelism chair at German UM seminary

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Funding for a new distinguished professor's chair in evangelism has been announced by the United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism.

Through a three-year commitment of approximately $90,000 by a United Methodist layman who chose to remain anonymous the foundation will endow the professorship for three years at a United Methodist-related seminary in Frankfurt, Germany.

The foundation also provides financial support for faculty chairs of evangelism at three United Methodist-related seminaries in the U.S.: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill.; Boston University School of Theology and Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

The scholar to hold the new chair in Germany must be approved by the 24-member United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism board and by officials of the seminary.

Other new developments announced by the foundation, which dates to 1949 under Methodist lay evangelist Harry Denman, include:

■ The first meeting of an international evangelism "think tank" in February 1992 at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. Some 30 scholars will present papers on evangelism in the world today. The institute will be coordinated by the Rev. James C. Logan, holder of the E. Stanley Jones distinguished professor chair of evangelism at Wesley Seminary. Officials of the foundation say the think tank will "help our church to have a practical theology about evangelism."

■ A "distinguished evangelist in residence," co-sponsored by the Foundation for Evangelism and the Section on Evangelism of the General Board of Discipleship.

The person to be selected must be a well-known pastor who has given distinguished service in evangelism. He or she will become an adjunct member of the evangelism staff for three years, beginning in September.

■ The selection of a "staff minister" for the Foundation for Evangelism." Named was the Rev. Joseph E. Taylor, retired pastor from Fort Smith, Ark.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

He 'lords it' as Scouting founder

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

CIMARRON, N.M.—Boy Scout leader Daniel M. Worley likes to make surprise entrances, particularly at a gathering of Scouts or Scout leaders.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

Daniel Worley poses as Lord Robert Baden-Powell.

His favorite, says the Kennesaw, Ga., United Methodist, is to march into a meeting to the accompaniment of British martial music dressed as Lord Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout movement in 1907.

Mr. Worley has spent years studying Baden-Powell, he told the Reporter at the recent national conference of United Methodist Scout Leaders in Cimarron.

Based on his studies, he said, he concluded that Baden-Powell loved to put on a show. So Mr. Worley developed his own act that involves telling little-known, sometimes amusing facts about the British war hero and quickly changing his costumes to illustrate his story.

The costumes, Mr. Worley said, are as authentic as possible.

Pointing to each item of his regalia from his chain mail epaulettes to his "ear burner" helmet, he explained how he found them over the years.

"Mostly through collectors," he said. "People collect absolutely anything."

Mr. Worley is a member of First United Methodist Church in Marietta, Ga., and an executive board member of the Boy Scouts Atlanta Area Council.

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Churches are the real 'healing places,' says WCC exec

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

Good health is not primarily a medical issue, according to Dr. David Hilton.

And it may be that churches play a larger role in good health than do hospitals, he adds.

Those may be unusual statements from a board-certified family practice physician. But Dr. Hilton, a United Methodist from the Florida Annual Conference, has the experience to back his claim.

In 1959-69, for instance, he served at the Evangelical United Brethren hospital in Bampur, Nigeria. After a time, it became "increasingly obvious" to him that, despite the best medical efforts, the general health of the people there was not improving.

David Hilton

"I became convinced that just curing sick people was not the best way to bring health," he said.

After working at a family practice clinic in Wisconsin, he returned to Nigeria in 1975. This time, as a consultant in community-based health care for the Church of the Brethren, he trained local organizers who "revolutionized" the health status of their communities through preventative measures.

Mothers are taught

In community-based medicine, for example, mothers are taught how to spoon-feed their children a combination of clean water, sugar and salt to prevent dehydration by diarrhea, one of the most preventable and most common causes of death.

Dr. Hilton continued his efforts in 1979 when he became clinical health director for the Seminole Native American tribe in Florida.

Now, as associate director of the World Council of Churches' Christian Medical Commission in Geneva, Switzerland, since 1986, he is spreading the preventative health message on a global level.

To the commission, health "is more than an absence of disease. It is seen as a dynamic state of well-being of the individual and the society; of physical, mental, spiritual, economic, political and social well-being; being in harmony with each other, with the natural environment and with God."

The commission works with more than 2,000 church-related hospitals, but medical programs are not its prime target. Dr. Hilton pointed out that many other church programs address the root causes of illness, the primary one being poverty.

'A world that is unhealthy'

"Ultimately, the most serious problem is spiritual," he added. "We have created a world that is unhealthy."

Recent studies on the immune system have shown that among the "strongest suppressors of the immune system are unresolved anger, guilt, resentment and meaninglessness," according to Hilton.

Congregations can become healing communities by offering spiritual support and loving relationships.

"It turns out the real healing places are not the hospitals, but the churches, if they will pick up the challenge," Dr. Hilton added.

Religious groups also need to press government to provide responsible health services for the poor and others without access to medical care, he said.

In the United States, for example, infant and maternal mortality rates have increased over the past 10 years as a "result of the government's decision to withhold funds for the poor (in favor of) advanced weapons systems," he said.

"Those deaths are less obvious but no less cruel than those at Tiananmen Square," Dr. Hilton added.

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Methodist youth conclave to discuss drug-abuse issue

United Methodist News Service

More than 200 youth from across the United States are expected to gather in Atlanta this fall to address the church's role in confronting drug abuse and related violence.

"Being My Neighbor's Neighbor," sponsored by the United Methodist Council of Bishops, and related to its Initiative Against Drugs and Violence, will be held Sept. 14-15 at the Omni Hotel at CNN Center, and Sept. 16-17 at The Carter Center.

Participants, representing the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, and United Methodist churches, will be expected to relate what they learn to work in their communities and churches, said Bishop Felton E. May.

Bishop May leads the United Methodist effort to confront issues related to drugs and violence.

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THE HUMAN/ECONOMIC APPALACHIAN Development Corporation (HEAD Corp) seeks a Development/Education Director for the Central Appalachian Peoples F.C.U., a community development credit union. C.A.P.F.C.U. is a regional cooperative based in Berea, Kentucky. Duties: coordinates member education, volunteer training programs and fundraising; prepares newsletters and reports; and implements strategies for credit union growth and development. $1000-1200 per month plus benefits. Send resumes to: Marcus Bordelon, P.O. Box 504, Berea, KY 40403. (606) 986-8423. Application accepted until 07/31/91.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

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'Expanding Our Sensitivity'

This week's column is written by the Reverend Christopher H. Andrews, Chair of the Louisiana Conference Board of Global Ministries. Mr. Andrews is pastor of First United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge.

In churches all over Louisiana youth and adults are participating in summer mission projects. Well-known ministries such as the Appalachian Service Project, Mountain Top Ministries and The Potato Project are just a few of the calls that Louisiana United Methodists are responding to this summer.

Other mission activities are just as exciting — a work camp in Alaska, a mission trip to Mexico, or Central America, or Africa or even Russia!

When you consider the energy invested in these worthwhile projects . . . well, you cannot help being impressed. The participants do valuable work that directly affects the quality of life for some of the "left out" people in the world. Yet I suspect that when a mission project is completed the "missioners" have gained more than they have given.

One of life's great challenges is to improve our ability to understand other people and enter sympathetically into their lives. A long time ago a man named Ezekiel found himself ministering to people who had seen the lamp of their hope go out. They were captives to the mighty Babylonians and were made to live as slaves on the banks of a river in a foreign land.

Ezekiel wanted to help them and give them hope. But he knew that before he could speak to them with credibility he must feel the depths of their despair. So he put it down simply when he said, ". . . I sat there among them, stunned, for seven days" (Ezekiel 3:15). The prophet went to live with the people. He experienced their captivity because he became a captive too. He was a live-in among those who had been shut out.

Every year our world grows smaller. And as it does the need for compassion and concern grows larger. Christ in our lives expands our sensitivity and enriches our awareness of other people. I am thankful for all the churches in our conference that are giving Christians an opportunity to "sit where others sit" as they minister through their summer mission projects. Such efforts enrich our spirits and enlarge our souls.

Let us keep this important outreach in our prayers.

Christopher H. Andrews

The Reverend Leslie Akin Joins CCOM Staff

The Reverend Leslie Akin

The Reverend Leslie Nichols Akin has been appointed Director of Christian Education, Worship and Young Adult Ministries of the Louisiana Conference Council on Ministries (CCOM). Her job includes assisting the CCOM in Conference programming as well "as acting as a resource person for the local church, Districts and Conference as each seeks God's vision for their mission and ministry in the areas of worship, Christian education, and young adult ministries."

Mrs. Akin is a recent graduate of Candler School of Theology, Emory University, as well as a graduate of Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. She has served as the Director of Children and Family Ministries at First United Methodist Church in Shreveport and was a co-founder and director there of LightHouse, an Educational Enrichment Center for impoverished persons. She is married to the Reverend Frank B. Akin and has two children, Rory, 15, and Chris, 12.

Dr. Donald C. Cottrill, Executive Director of the CCOM, states that he is "excited to have Rev. Akin on the staff of the CCOM [because] she brings to the Council a history of innovation in programming to meet the demands that vital congregations require. Her enthusiasm and leadership," he continues, "invite others to think new thoughts and develop new ministries."

Alexandria District Holds Mission Rally

Chile is the focus of foreign mission efforts of the Alexandria District for 1991-92 since United Methodism has some of its most outstanding mission efforts in the growing Chilean Church. Of special interest to the Louisiana Annual Conference are the ministries of the Reverend David and Dr. Mary Sue Lowrey and some of their mission associates. The Reverend Stan and Mrs. Beryl Moore have relatives within the Conference and the Reverend Don and Mrs. Connie Waddell have a host of friends from their associations at Mount Sequoyah in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and their ministries in Dallas.

The Waddells were the guest speakers recently at the mission fair for the District held at First United Methodist Church in Pineville. Over 100 pastors and mission leaders were inspired by their witnesses about the continuing service of missions in medical, educational, agricultural and evangelistic work. A District team has planned summer work to observe the work in Chile and identify all the ways local churches can be in partnership with the mission there.

In a covenant service at the mission fair, 34 student scholarships of $100 (a year's tuition, room and board) were pledged. Additional scholarships, supplies and needed aids for the missionaries will be provided by the purchase of Shares of Mission, certificates issues by the District signifying the commitment to mission made by individuals and groups to this endeavor.

Shown during the Mission Fair held in the Alexandria District are l. to r., the Reverend Don Waddell and his wife Connie, who are Missionaries to Chile; Mrs. Joanne White, District Chairperson, Global Ministries; and the Reverend C. Richard Hoffpauir, Alexandria District Superintendent.

Services Held in a Tent

Francis Asbury United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge, held its 25th anniversary celebration Sunday, May 19. After the morning worship service, preached by former pastor J. Ryan Horton, the congregation moved its afternoon celebrations to a tent.

These services, led by former pastor James W. Spitzkeit and Larry Maddin, were reminiscent of the church's first worship services (1966 to 1967) that were held in a tent.

The Reverend M. C. Cady is the current pastor of Francis Asbury.

Present members of Francis Asbury UMC gather in front of a tent which reminded them of the church's first worship service in May of 1966. The occasion took place during the church's 25th anniversary celebration.

Louisiana UM Youth are Winners!

Congratulations to our Louisiana Annual Conference Youth for receiving — not one but — two Certificates of Recognition for their contributions to the Youth Service Fund (YSF)!

The awards were given to Louisiana youth for their outstanding achievement in their per capita giving to the YSF as well as the absolute dollars given to this agency. The Louisiana Conference was one of twenty that received this honor.

In 1989, youth and adult delegates to the National Youth Ministry Organization Convocation and Legislative Assembly voted to work toward doubling their giving to the YSF over the next several years. Louisiana, in order to meet this goal, needed to raise $7,510 for 1990; $9,385 for 1991; and $11,262 for 1992.

The Louisiana youth not only made the 1990 goal, but they exceeded it. They raised $9,560.37. The Monroe District youth led the state in the highest percentage of increase in their donation for that year. Other districts are working hard to do the same for this year.

Well done, young United Methodists. Keep up your good mission work!

Thank You! Louisiana Annual Conference

Words are inadequate to express appreciation to the Louisiana Annual Conference for the retirement dinner given in my honor Sunday night before Annual Conference and for the many other kindnesses shown me in this year of retirement. It has been a great privilege to serve on the cabinet of the seven bishops who have led us since we became an area in 1960. This is a conference made up of the best laity and clergy in Methodism. Thanks to each of you who have blessed my life through these past forty-eight years since I was licensed to preach.

Jimmie Caraway

Around the Conference

May 19, 1991, was a special day for Pelican UMC in the Shreveport District. Sixteen new members were received into the congregation; eleven baptisms were performed by the Rev. Roy E. Mouser, pastor. This 48% increase in membership followed a series of Enquirer's Classes taught by the Rev. and Mrs. Mouser, along with visitation by them and laity.

Ten ministers from the Louisiana Conference recently attended a Growth Plus Consultant Training School in Nashville. The event was held at Scarritt-Bennett Center March 11-14. Those attending under the auspice of the Louisiana Conference Board of Discipleship were left to right: Scott Adams, David Dietzel, Isiah Lee, John Tellifero, Pete Harrington, Jimmie Pyles, Larry O'Dell, Larry Miller, Scott Bullock, Randall Campbell, and Joaquin Garcia.

The Rev. W. O. Lynch, former chaplain of the Methodist Home of New Orleans (center), accepts a check from Al Jung, president of the Arabi UMC Shepherd's Club. The donation represents a portion of the proceeds of the Annual Rummage Sale held on the church grounds. Also shown (right) is the Rev. Bob Bengtson, pastor of Arabi and St. Bernard UM Churches. The Arabi UM congregation has been a supporter of the ministry of the Methodist Home of New Orleans for a number of years.

Curriculum consultants Marjorie Monnet of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Inez Laird of Jackson, Mississippi, share a lighter moment during a weeklong meeting at the United Methodist Publishing House. Ten regional consultants met for a week with UM curriculum resources' planners and editors. Assisting UM Sunday Schools in selecting and using UM resources, Laird serves churches in the Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Monroe, New Orleans and North Shore Districts.

Danny Horrell, Harold Mason Jr., Fuzzy O'Boyle, Youth Director Ray Hansen and UMYF President (at that time) Kenny Morrow (foreground) of McGuire UMC in West Monroe, are shown sitting among pumpkins which the youth group sold as a fundraiser last fall. The youth raised over $600.

The Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell, pastor of Hartzell-Mount Zion UMC, Slidell, is shown participating as a Celebrity Reader at Alton Elementary School in North Slidell. He was invited by the school's principal and Ms. Idell Vaultz, a teacher at Alton, who also serves as a Sunday School teacher at Hartzell. Mr. Campbell was featured in the June 1991 national newsletter of ClergyCard International. This is an ecumenical discount club based out of Muskegon, Michigan, for clergy and other religious workers in America.

Editorial

A sense of holy wonder

A recent "Ziggy" cartoon shows a doomsday prophet holding a sign that says: "Wonders cease today!"

In noteworthy contrast, the current "Life" magazine cover story—"Do you believe in miracles?"—suggests that "signs and wonders" are very much with us.

Consider:

■ An Atlanta woman recently heard a voice telling her to look up as she was driving, whereupon, she says, she saw an image of Jesus gazing from a Pizza Hut billboard ad. Others claim to have seen the same image.

■ An icon at a Greek Orthodox church in New York City bears the image of Saint Irene. Thousands of believers say they have seen actual tears fall from the saint's eyes.

■ Two Yugoslavian schoolgirls walking on a mountain path 10 years ago said they saw the Virgin Mary hovering above the ground. Since then, millions of pilgrims worldwide, Protestant as well as Catholic, have visited the site. Many claim to have been cured of disease.

With no disrespect for "Ziggy," we find "Life's" conclusions about miracles—supematural events that defy explanation by natural causes—more credible. We see at least three related implications for Christians and unbelievers alike.

First, skeptics and doomsday prophets can rail all they want against the existence or nonexistence of miracles. The fact that millions of ordinary people seek and often claim to experience extraordinary "signs and wonders" points to a persistent reality: Human beings are profoundly religious creatures who have an abiding need for relationship with life's Eternal Reality—God.

Second, inexplicable experiences of God's presence and workings—whether in the form of new vision, fresh insight or healing of body and/or spirit, underscore an oft-forgotten truth: The power of God is greater than our human capacity to understand.

This is an important realization in a world where human power is exaggerated and exalted and Divine Power tends to be ignored. Needed is an humble awareness that God's ways are not our ways and that true power is rooted in discerning and doing the will and ways of God.

Finally, the title of the "Life" cover story—"Do you believe in miracles?"—reflects a common theological confusion.

The underlying issue is not whether miracles occur, but whether one believes in a living God who performs miracles, beginning with the miracle of creation and life itself!

As Christians, we are not called to abandon reason and take at face value all claims of "miracles." Gullibility is not a mark of spiritual maturity.

We should proclaim unashamedly and with a sense of holy wonder, however, that God "moves in mysterious ways." To recognize that God performs countless daily miracles ranging from the supematural to human acts of love is a sign of spiritual health.

Whether one believes in a living God who performs miracles, beginning with the miracle of creation and life itself—that's the underlying issue behind a recent "Life" magazine cover story, "Do you believe in miracles?"

Letters to the Editor

NCC's theology shows it's lost in wilderness

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell (to whom you seem to be devoting a lot of favorable publicity), typifies rather than corrects what has been and is wrong with the National Council of Churches (see UMR, June 28).

Her statement that "the theological task for our time is teaching people about unity" proves that fact. The theological task of the Christian church has been to spread the Gospel throughout the world and will remain so until Jesus Christ returns in glory (see Matthew 28:19-20).

To place any goal or task above spreading the Gospel, whether it be "unity, justice, peace," or any other buzz word, is to ultimately neutralize the power of the Christian message and to squelch the Holy Spirit. When that happens, churches spin into irrelevance and decline, which is what is now occurring in many mainline denominations.

Despite a new logo, new chief executive and being close to President Bush, the National Council of Churches is still lost in the wildemess.

Ronald Stelzleni
Greenwood, Illinois

All of us are greedy

A June 14 letter condemned the medical profession for rapacity. Why only doctors?

Most of the rest of us do our bit. We live in a society whose creed is to compete and win, no matter what we do to gain our wealth. The more we have, the greater respect we receive. We are rewarded by our companies for the amount of business we bring in—no matter how we bring it in.

From plumbers and carpenters to contractors, from corporate to government employees, most of us live by a simple plan: a) do no more work than we need to; b) charge as much (or demand as much in wages) as we can get, and if we are very smart; c) manipulate the market with take-overs or advertising, in such a way as to make quick profits for quick spending. Our wealth is artificial. It does not represent hard, creative work.

For a short time we will exploit the poor of the world. After all, they would do the same to us if they had the chance.

The church speaks feebly against this creed of capitalism for fear it be rejected by the people. Thank God, there are a few exceptions. There are a few who in the discipline of divine love, live to help others, not themselves.

Pat Shull
Fairfield Glade, Tennessee

War protest was Christian

Two articles in the June 28 issue stated that President Bush "functions out of who he is as a Christian" and that the church is wrong to support a United Methodist soldier who objects to military service.

A layman in our church is the superintendent of construction jobs in Saudi Arabia. He has been there for periods of a few weeks for several years. He told our church school class about some of his experiences there.

A major part of his Christian witness comes from the ways he treats the workmen whom he hires. His respect for them and his consideration of their needs is a new experience for them. The Arabs are accustomed to brutality. Harming and killing people they don't like is routine practice. When they remark about his kindness, he tells them that it is because he is a Christian.

I asked him if Saddam Hussein was any more brutal than other people in power, and he replied "no." It seems that our American government picked one of the lot to demonize. The whole pro-military emphasis was to justify our devastation of life and property as a means of stopping the most brutal man on earth.

And so it is a Christian position worthy of our church leadership to honor those who object to military service in that war which was absolutely unnecessary.

Charles W. Tryon
La Verne, California

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, must be original and must carry the signature and address of the author.

The editors reserve the right to edit, condense or reject any letters received.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Here I Stand

We must stop organizing for biblical illiteracy!

By ELEANOR FINKBEINER

We as a denomination are looking for solutions to our nation's problems of drugs, alcoholism, slums, moral irresponsibility and other symptoms of degeneration. We need a spiritually empowered people to make a difference. Yet we as a church are at an all-time high in biblical illiteracy.

As I see it, we as a church are organized to create biblical illiteracy! We are not equipping the clergy or laity for the teaching ministry as interpreters of the church's text, the Bible.

First a bit of history.

Took 21 years

Combining the Boards of Christian Education from the three Methodist denominations that united in 1939 was not completed until the 1960 General Conference—21 years later.

In 1968 this reorganized Board of Christian Education was placed in limbo while The United Methodist Church came into being. It took 11 more years to produce a resource guide, "Foundations for Teaching and Learning in The United Methodist Church."

The 1972 General Conference was influenced by a desire to streamline program boards and reduce costs. A super-board named the General Board of Discipleship came into being on the evening of the last day.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Eleanor G. Finkbeiner is a member of Central United Protestant Church, Richland, Wash. (Pacific-Northwest Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Instead of more adequately serving the local church for equipping and training a biblically literate people through Christian education, the visibility of Christian education was reduced.

All that remains of Christian Education in the Board of Discipleship are nine staff people to bring national and international resources to the attention of some 8.8 million United Methodists.

In the late 1980s a nine-month Bible study called "Disciple" was presented to the church by the Council of Bishops, yet accountability to see it put into action in local congregations was overlooked. Consequently, United Methodists are being attracted to other groups that have effective Bible study programs.

All told, the effort to create organizational stability took 32 years, during which the church gave more attention to structure than equipping of a biblically hungry people.

Three legs to stand on

The church is like a three-legged stool: education, evangelism and outreach. Each leg must be equally strong for the church to stand.

Right now we are trying to stand on only the leg of outreach. Yet how can we be basically responsible if we are not educationally prepared?

We need to be able to speak and act from the fullness of God and not from our emptiness. We cannot be an empowered church doing battle with principalities and rulers of darkness without strong foundation of biblical faith.

Constant organizational reshuffles have taken their toll. A preoccupation with political and social issues at the expense of empowering the laity and clergy with the teaching of the Word has alienated many members. Many people along the way have pointed out similar warning signs, but the church has not listened to itself.

Jesus gave time to both teaching and preaching the Word and commanded us to do likewise, as seen in Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 28:19-20.

Both are bankrupt

We need to solve our Christian education deficit. We have done to Christian education and evangelism what savings and loan associations have done with the banking business. Both are bankrupt!

At this point we are about where England was when John Wesley came into leadership for England. We need leaders who will lead in making teaching ministries a priority of the church.

When The United Methodist Church decides to take the lead in the teaching ministry, the local church will bless us and be blessed.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
_____	___ :	_____

(Last week's answer: Deuteronomy 30:19)

Readings for week of July 22

Monday: Psalms 53:1-3
Tuesday: Psalms 53:4-6
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 11:1-9
Thursday: 2 Samuel 11:10-15
Friday: Mark 6:30-44
Saturday: Ephesians 2:11-16
Sunday: Ephesians 2:17-22

Faithfully yours

I can hear it now: 'Show the truth, the whole truth'

Something happened the other day in my old hometown that made me think of a paraphrase of John 8:32:

"You shall know the truth . . . and it'll be easier if you have access to videotape."

John Lovelace

You may recall that the Gospel writer left unstated exactly how we shall "know the truth."

He surely didn't have in mind videotapes or camcorders or other modern means of communication—or, for that matter, even newspapers and printing presses.

But there it was that night on TV: Videotape taken by an amateur—actually a woman from Ohio visiting in Fort Worth, Texas in a home hundreds of yards away—showing a policeman using his baton repeatedly to beat a handcuffed man who allegedly attempted to escape from a police car.

This videotape is almost certain to be used in proceedings against the offending officer, even as a similar tape—likewise shot by a home videotaper—is being used in proceedings against Los Angeles policemen accused of beating a crime suspect.

I can hear it now: The famous courtroom oath revised to include a promise "to show the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Videotape belongs, then, in a long line of media which have the capacity to help us know the truth—and, let us remember, the untruth.

Where, I wonder, in this unwinding search for truth, might lie its use for the church?

On a somewhat superficial but nonetheless meaningful level, the video camera might be expanded from its pedantic use in theology school classrooms and established additionally in real-life sanctuaries. Let the camera record the highs and lows, the emotional excesses or emotional boredom of our worship practices.

Let a returned volunteer-in-mission plug his or her tape into the church's VCR and show a Sunday school class or a mission-study group what people in some faraway place really look and sound like.

Let the council on ministries see videotapes of what goes on in the church's day-care center or on its older-adult outings.

Show the boys and girls swimming, resting, studying and praying at church camp.

The list of "coming attractions" for church use of videotape is as endless as the menu of ministries itself.

To the extent that video cameras and videotape can, indeed, help us both know the truth and share the truth, we should welcome them and use them as we seek to serve the One whom we know as the Truth.

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

Mr. Lovelace is Managing Editor of the Reporter.

Welcome to new readers in The Woodlands

This issue we welcome as new UMR readers some 100 member-families of Christ Church United Methodist in The Woodlands, Texas (Texas Annual Conference).

This is the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in The Woodlands, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "What do you think?"

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

The United Methodist REPORTER

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Call collect or write to: Bruce Baily or Christine Bishop, UMR Special Editions, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275, (214) 630-6495.

Faith watch

UMC/SOVIET PACTS: A series of agreements dealing with education, communications, publishing and health care has been signed by officials of United Methodist general agencies, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Peace Fund. The agreements were drawn during a June 28-29 meeting in Vienna. Key points include: **establishment** of religious publishing projects in the U.S.S.R.; **creation** of a new religious university and theological seminary and exchange of teachers and students in religious studies; **development** of a nationwide religious radio and television network and exchange of producers and technical experts; **assistance** for medical facilities and personnel and exchange of health-care personnel with United Methodist hospitals; **shipment** of badly needed medical equipment and medicines.

BISHOP WRITES BUSH: In an open letter to President Bush, United Methodist Bishop **Robert C. Morgan** (Mississippi Area) has called for a get-tough policy toward Israel. Bishop Morgan recently visited Israel to assess security conditions. He is scheduled to lead a study seminar there for pastors in February 1992. He said the Israeli government "possesses an arrogance toward the world" and has as its objective "to drive the Palestinian people out of the Israeli occupied areas or, at best, impose an inferior class citizenship that strips them of property, dignity and humanity." The bishop's letter was published in the conference's official United Methodist newspaper, the "Advocate."

Robert Morgan

CALL FOR HEALTH CARE: The 723 delegates of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted overwhelmingly last week to take specific actions toward achieving universal health care—regardless of the recipient's employment status or income. The call included recommendations for promoting educational programs within churches and developing regional and national strategies for legislation. General Synod, meeting in Norfolk, Va., also urged establishment of a federally funded, long-term care program to help families pay for care in nursing homes, hospices or in the home.

PURGING RACISM: The Church of the Brethren, one of the nation's historic "peace" churches, wants to purge itself of institutional racism that has kept the denomination's black membership below 0.5 percent and left its national and district offices without a single black staff official. In a recent meeting in Portland, Ore., delegates to the 150,000-member denomination's annual conference endorsed a comprehensive effort to improve the church's record—including development of a partnership with a predominantly black denomination, hiring a black staff person to work full-time in black ministries and vigorous affirmative-action hiring practices in all Brethren institutions.

NATIONWIDE MAILING: In what may be the largest direct mail campaign ever undertaken in the nation, the 550-member Sycamore Church of Christ of Cookeville, Tenn., is working with Advo Systems of Dallas to distribute an eight-page cartoon brochure with a message of how to accept Christ as savior. The mailing also offers a free Bible correspondence course. The Cookeville church has raised $7 million from 2,700 of the 13,000 Churches of Christ congregations for the mailing. The campaign is designed to target all 102 million households in the nation, but the remaining brochures won't be mailed until an additional $3 million is raised to cover the cost.

Compiled from news and staff reports

20 conferences buck U.S. membership decline

Largest number of conferences since 1984 reports growth; fewer losses reported also

Each of the 20 annual conferences of The United Methodist Church enlarged on this map reported a net membership gain for 1990. Overall, the denomination registered an unofficial 62,794 net membership loss in the United States last year. U.S. membership now stands at 8.81 million, a 0.007 percent decrease from 1989. The percentage of decrease has remained level for the past three years.

UMR MAP BY TOM GIBSON

Western Jurisdiction

Conference	Members	Gain	Loss
Alaska	3,774	+ 39	
Calif.-Nevada	94,328	+ 318	
Calif.-Pacific	123,192		-2,734
Desert Southwest	51,486	+ 226	
Oregon-Idaho	45,255		-592
Pacific N.W.	73,657		-882
Rocky Mountain	82,816		-997
Yellowstone	19,983		-536

Unofficial membership totals as of July, 1991. The General Council on Finance and Administration is to release official 1990 tallies in early 1992.

SOURCE: Staff reports and "The United Methodist Newscopa."

South Central Jurisdiction

Conference	Members	Gain	Loss
Central Texas	137,137	+ 1,129	
Kansas East	81,101		-1,318
Kansas West	103,172		-1,805
Little Rock	72,827		-3
Louisiana	131,365		-1,938
Missouri East	87,611		-998
Missouri West	115,154		-1,096
Nebraska	112,817		-1,472
New Mexico	55,912		-1,976
North Arkansas	84,963		-799
North Texas	149,290	+ 617	
Northwest Texas	77,549		-3,000
Oklahoma	252,381	+ 1,323	
Okla. Indian	8,008	+ 171	
Rio Grande	14,814	+ 135	
*Southwest Texas	107,514		-487
Texas	279,829	+ 1,731	

*1989 Tally

North Central Jurisdiction

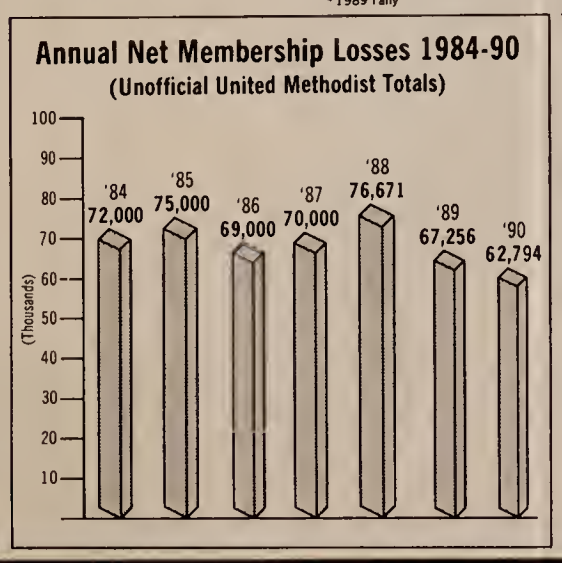
Conference	Members	Gain	Loss
Central Illinois	150,827		-2,467
Detroit	115,355		-1,306
East Ohio	207,733		-4,160
Iowa	213,419		-2,857
Minnesota	111,307		-893
North Dakota	18,539		-283
North Indiana	124,874		-2,874
North Illinois	137,557		-4,038
South Dakota	34,663		-987
South Indiana	142,631		-4,108
South Illinois	56,293		-825
West Michigan	82,128		-849
West Ohio	309,582		-4,628
Wisconsin	117,917		-2,675

Southeastern Jurisdiction

Conference	Members	Gain	Loss
Ala.-W.Fla.	134,939	+ 1,677	
Florida	345,316	+ 676	
Holston	176,956		-314
Kentucky	78,194	+ 372	
Louisville	86,062		-959
Memphis	94,055		-762
Mississippi	186,095		-459
North Alabama	168,096		-611
North Carolina	218,423	+ 142	
North Georgia	273,559	+ 3,278	
Red Bird	1,332	+ 21	
South Carolina	244,316	+ 256	
South Georgia	146,369		-157
Tennessee	112,815		-692
Virginia	351,690		-1,303
Western N.C.	276,078	+ 1,621	

Northeastern Jurisdiction

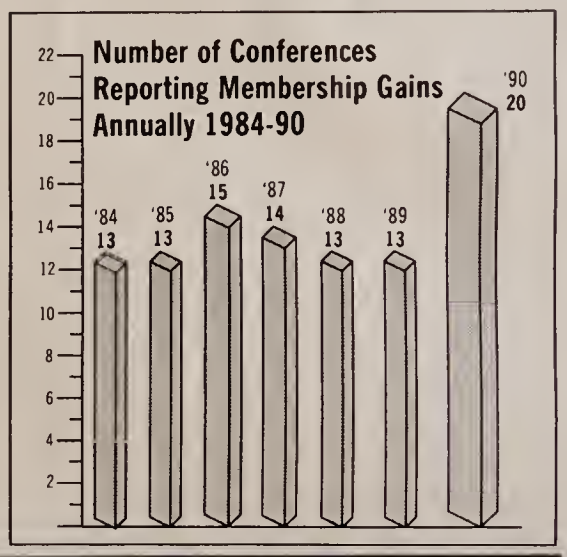
Conference	Members	Gain	Loss
Baltimore	225,337		-520
Central Pa.	181,229		-2,270
Eastern Pa	147,750		-904
Maine	28,920		-143
New Hampshire	17,454	+ 58	
New York	156,849		-2,700
North Central N.Y.	99,380		-1,654
Northern N.J.	54,680		-1,280
Peninsula	98,244	+ 99	
Puerto Rico	9,309	+ 32	
S. New England	72,993		-512
Southern N.J.	82,441		-536
Troy	69,214		-1,641
West Virginia	135,501		-3,357
Western N.Y.	68,186		-823
Western Pa	214,272		-1,719
Wyoming	70,875		-303



Charts show decline slows, more conferences grow

These charts show the amount of net membership loss (left) and the number of conferences reporting membership gains annually (right) within The United Methodist Church (U.S. only) from 1984 through 1990. The chart of net membership loss shows the 1990 net decrease to be the least since 1984. The chart of annual conference gains shows that more conferences reported membership increases in 1990 than in any other year since 1984. These charts are based on unofficial totals announced annually at conference sessions and published in the Reporter. The United Methodist Church has recorded net membership losses in the United States every year since the denomination was formed in 1968.

UMR CHARTS BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE



African bishop hails sanctions' end

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Following last week's lifting of economic sanctions by the U.S. against South Africa, the presiding bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa called upon all Christians to assist in the promotion of Christian ethics.

Bishop M. Stanley Mogoba of Johannesburg told the Reporter he welcomes the action by President Bush.

However, the bishop expressed regret "that sanctions had had to be introduced as a means of bringing the South African government to its senses."

Economic sanctions were imposed in 1986, restricting U.S. businesses from trading or investing in South Africa.

President Bush said the sanctions had been lifted because South Africa has met five conditions specified in U.S. law in 1986: ended its state of emergency; legalized opposition political parties; repealed apartheid laws; started talks to give blacks a vote and voice in government, and moved to free all political prisoners.

Bishop Mogoba personally knows the importance of the last-mentioned item. He was a political prisoner for more than three years in the 1960s before answering the call to ministry as an ordained Methodist clergyman.

Bishop Mogoba said that a massive foreign capital drive is needed now to kick-start his country's economy.

He said assistance is particularly needed in the field of education, "because a well-educated population would be equipped to face the future and to deal with problems such as housing and health."

The bishop said he also hopes that the lifting of sanctions would lead to a reduction in violence.

"I believe sanctions have contributed to economic decline," he said. "Poor socio-political and economic conditions have in turn contributed to the violence that has raped our land and debilitated our people.

"The country now needs leaders with statesmanlike qualities who can rise above party political differences and build the much-needed bridges required to take us all into a truly democratic, non-racial and just South Africa.

"I call on all Christians to play a major role in promoting Christian ethics. The church has an important responsibility for the future."

The United Methodist General Conference in 1988 adopted a resolution calling on all governments to "implement a policy of comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa and Namibia through multilateral efforts and the United Nations Security Council."

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Bishop M. Stanley Mogoba of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa welcomed last week's lifting of U.S. sanctions against the South African government (see related stories).

Missions board executive calls U.S. move premature

Reporter Staff Special

ATLANTA—"United Methodists must begin to ask, 'Are we going to allow our resources to be invested in companies that go back into South Africa before the apartheid system has really changed?'"

That's the opinion of Doreen Tilghman, chief executive for Africa, Europe and the Middle East for the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

She spoke with the Reporter during last week's missionary conference in Atlanta, responding to President Bush's announcement that U.S. sanctions will be lifted against South Africa.

Ms. Tilghman said that the lifting of economic sanctions was premature, since black South Africans still don't have many basic rights.

"There is no doubt in anyone's mind that reforms have been made in South Africa, especially regarding the release of political prisoners. But what kind of society will that person find when he returns from prison?"

The mission board executive added that the lifting of sanctions will not make a difference in the sending of mission personnel to South Africa or the receiving of South African Methodists as guests in United Methodist churches in the U.S.

"Before sanctions, it was always difficult for mission personnel to attain visas to enter that country," said Ms. Tilghman.

"It's always been even more difficult for black South Africans to leave and come here."

Ms. Tilghman said she is not convinced that sanctions were a major cause of violence in South Africa, nor, she said, is she convinced that more economic trade will end the violence.

She said United Methodists will have to help seek other leverages to encourage substantial changes in South Africa.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Faith connections

COSTS FORM OBSTACLE: Rising costs for clergy pensions and health care are making it difficult for small-membership churches to fulfill their other ministry responsibilities, a widely known church consultant has told Virginia United Methodist leaders. "We are pricing our pastors out of the market," said the Rev. **Lyle E. Schaller**, a United Methodist clergyman affiliated with the interdenominational Yokefellow Institute. In general, he said, about 125 persons in worship are needed to "afford a full-time" pastor, and thousands of churches have fewer.

MISSIONS SUPPORT: The church's General Board of Global Ministries is setting up a network of volunteers to help interpret to congregations the role of missionaries and to increase financial backing for missions. Some 250 individuals from 17 regional annual conferences are involved in the project's first phase, according to **Elizabeth Howard**, project director. She said monetary support for missions has increased in the year since the program began.

DIRECTOR CHOSEN: Black Methodists for Church Renewal, the unofficial caucus for black United Methodist concerns, has selected the Rev. **Joseph Roberson** of St. Simons Island, Ga., as its executive director. Mr. Roberson will assume duties at BMCR's Dayton, Ohio, office on Sept. 1. He is an associate director of the South Georgia conference council on ministries, the first black in such a post in that conference.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD: A Baltimore graduate student, **Jenness E. Hall**, has received the 1991-92 Esther Edwards Scholarship from the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Ms. Hall is pursuing a doctorate in education from Indiana University in Bloomington and plans a career in college administration. She is a member of Grace United Methodist Church in Baltimore. The $5,000 scholarship, named for a former executive of the board's office of loans and scholarships, is awarded annually to a female student preparing for a career in higher education.

Jenness E. Hall

NAMED TO STAFF: The Rev. **James A. Noseworthy**, chaplain, director of church relations and instructor in religion at United Methodist-related Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, has been named director of annual conference relations and public policy programs in the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's Division of Higher Education, effective July 29. He will succeed the Rev. **Robert Conn**, who has joined the faculty of United Methodist-related Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, N.C.

CORRECTION: The Rocky Mountain Annual Conference approved a statement of support for the intent of the work of a committee assigned to study homosexuality on behalf of the denomination, not support for the work of the committee as reported July 5.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Sleeves-rolled-up volunteers sought for mission teams

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—"I want someone who will roll with the punches, doesn't have to have certain foods, and will not be telling [the local] people what to do in their churches," says Rubye Kitchings of Kingston, Tenn., a United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission coordinator.

Mrs. Kitchings was a member of the design team for the 1991 Southeastern Jurisdiction Volunteers-in-Mission Rally at Lake Junaluska last month (see related stories, UMR July 12).

A member of Kingston (Tenn.) United Methodist Church, she is also a "team leader," logging some 17 trips domestically and internationally in the name of missions.

This year she took one group to Mexico, another to Alaska.

Mrs. Kitchings says members of her team are told up front they are "going to do the Lord's work and shouldn't ask for special favors."

Team members, she adds, should "forget a few inconveniences and see the mission trip as an adventure."

The Rev. Thomas Curtis, director of the volunteers-in-mission program for the church's nine-state Southeastern Jurisdiction, said one of the first steps he lists in becoming a mission volunteer is to complete a "missioner profile/missioner agreement" application.

After specifying location and name of the intended mission project, the would-be volunteer missioner takes a skills inventory in such areas as construction, medicine, education, agriculture, evangelism.

Finally, the missioner must agree to guidelines recommended by the VIM board of directors. They read, in part:

"Volunteers-in-mission are not tourists; they go at the invitation of another church as guests. It is extremely important to be willing to adjust to the expectations of the host church."

Missioners must agree to "share their faith in an appropriate Christian manner;" cooperate with the team leader; and agree to abstain from offensive habits while on the mission.

Experienced VIM team leaders offer further words of advice to anyone considering volunteering:

■ Be sure to contact your annual conference and/or district mission coordinators before your mission trip.

Pat Wagner, VIM coordinator for missioners going to Jamaica, said, "It is also very important that volunteers in mission go through the VIM coordinator for your place of interest, so church officials there will be prepared for your group. That way, you will be working on a priority project for that area."

A former VIM coordinator for the Louisville Annual Conference, Ms. Wagner says she went on her first mission trip to Haiti in 1980 "and got hooked."

She and her husband, Jerry, became so involved that they applied for fulltime mission service with the General Board of Global Ministries. Now they are missionaries with the Methodist Church in Jamaica.

■ "Don't expect to go with us for an island vacation, because you'll work harder than you do on your regular job!" says Linda Field of Belmont UMC in Nashville.

She told the Reporter that her mission team to the island of Saint Vincent, West Indies, works from "sun up to sun down."

"And please don't come if you think we'll be staying in some Holiday Inn," she continued. "We stay in a church hall or right in the homes of local people."

But probably the most important advice comes from Carlos Romero Vargas, one of five VIM coordinators for The Methodist Church of Mexico.

A member of the Septentrional Conference in Central Mexico, Mr. Vargas says, all in all, United Methodist mission teams "have a great experience."

"Ask these people why they want to come back to Mexico: it's because we treat them so good ... and because they are seeing everything through the eyes of God."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Cecilia Manness, United Methodist missionary to Haiti, exhibits artifacts from her adopted homeland. She was among several missionaries attempting to interest United Methodists in visiting mission fields as volunteers-in-mission (related stories at left).

Volunteers in Mission: scheduled rallies and contact persons

North Central Jurisdiction, Aug. 23-25, North Webster, Ind. Contact Beverly Nolte, director of "Intersharing" (515) 265-0268

South Central Jurisdiction Aug. 30-Sept. 1 Mt. Sequoyah, Fayetteville, Ark. Contact the Rev. Max Marable, director of "Superserve" (214) 317-3606

For Western Jurisdiction events, contact Blythe Stanton, 1035 Maple, Junction City, Oregon 97448 (503) 998-1562

For Northeastern Jurisdiction events, contact, Earl and Lura Griswold 105 Bell Rd. Westminster, Maryland 21157 (301) 848-9635

World Methodists to gather in Singapore; theme 'Jesus Christ—God's Living Word'

United Methodist News Service

The environment, persons in a variety of oppressive circumstances, evangelism and God's word for today will be among topics before an estimated 3,000 Christians in the Wesleyan tradition when they meet from around the globe for the 16th World Methodist Conference July 24-31 in Singapore.

Focused on the overall theme of "Jesus Christ—God's Living Word," conference sessions will examine these subjects and others in addresses by noted church figures from Africa, Korea, India, Great Britain, Germany and the United States.

The United Methodist Reporter will provide coverage of the conference from Singapore beginning with the Aug. 2 issue.

The conference will be the first such gathering to be held in Asia in the 110-year history of the World Methodist movement.

Substantial numbers of Asians will be among those attending, according to the Rev. Joe Hale of Lake Junaluska, N.C., general secretary of the World Methodist Council.

The traditional Asian "Dance of the Lion" and a procession of banners representing the 64 constituent bodies of the council will open the conference. More than 54 million Methodists make up the World Methodist community.

About half of the participants will be from North America, Dr. Hale said.

They will come from the Methodist Church of Mexico, the United Church of Canada, and the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, United Methodist, Free Methodist and Wesleyan churches in the United States.

Speakers from the United States will include Dr. Hale; Edith Ming of New Orleans, outgoing president of the World Federation of Methodist Women; the Rev. Maxie Dunnam of Memphis, Tenn.; the Rev. James T. Laney of Atlanta; the Rev. William K. Quick of Detroit; the Rev. Eddie Fox of Nashville, Tenn., head of the World Methodist evangelism program; James W. Holsinger of Washington and I. Carlton Faulk of Berkeley, Calif.

Meeting concurrently with the World Methodist Conference will be the 500-member World Methodist Council headed by Bishop Lawi Imathiu of Kenya.

The council will hear reports from about a dozen related committees and will map the council's work for the next five years.

The World Methodist Council traces its history to 1881.

Conferences have been held at approximately five-year intervals since 1947, all in either the United States or England, except for Oslo, Norway, in 1961; Dublin, Ireland, in 1976; and Nairobi, Kenya, in 1986.

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DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES in a 2200-membership church. Responsibilities include a state and nationally accredited day school through kindergarten, as well as Christian education for children's Sunday School program, nursery thru fifth grade. Master's degree in either early childhood education or child development, as well as in Christian education desired. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Send resume and current salary package to: Search Committee, Westbury United Methodist Church, 5200 Willowbend, Houston, TX 77096.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY: Saint Stephen United Methodist Church, Amarillo, Texas, is seeking full-time lay or ordained person for youth, college, young single, plus additional pastoral opportunities. Large program with 80 + active youth. Send resume to: Rev. Jim W. Smith, 4600 South Western, Amarillo, TX 79109. (806) 355-7271.

NEEDED: VOLUNTEER COUPLE as Innkeeper and Maintenance persons, Hinton Rural Life Center, Hayesville, NC. Housing provided. (704) 389-8336.

DIRECTOR/MINISTER OF MUSIC. White Bluff United Methodist Church, an alive and growing church of 1900, seeks a full-time Director/Minister of Music — graded choirs, handbells, tone chimes. Send resumes with references to: Hurley Cook, 11911 White Bluff Road, Savannah, GA 31419.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES for 1,100-member church located in beautiful deep East-Texas. Continue and expand existing active choir program. Tremendous opportunity in wonderful church. Send resume to: Director of Music Ministries, Box 127, Jasper, TX 75951. (409) 384-5735.

PART-TIME POSITION OPEN: Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Conference United Methodist Foundation, beginning January 1, 1992. Please send resume to: John P. Foreman, 12755 W. Cedar Dr., Lakewood, CO 80228. (303) 989-3727.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Director of Christian Education. Full-time position in a dynamic and rapidly growing church of 3300 members. Salary is negotiable. Send resume to: Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388.

FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR for 2500-member congregation of FUMC of Conroe, TX. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Search Committee, First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 928, Conroe, TX 77305.

FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR needed. Suburban Houston church with established program. Salary negotiable. Send resume or contact Strawbridge UMC, 5629 Kingwood Drive, Kingwood, TX 77345. (713) 360-4500.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN Education. Full-time ministry with children/youth. Degree/experience required. Job description available. First United Methodist, Box 294, Madison, FL 32340.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING received for a full-time Christian Education/Youth Worker. Please send your letter of application with references and resume before August 5, 1991 to: Dr. Carol Roettmer Brewer, 815 North Broad, Fremont, NE 68025.

MANAGING EDITOR. Responsible for assisting the Editor in the planning, designing and production of Response Magazine. Assists in the development of promotional and marketing plans. Writes and procures articles and other materials. Candidate must have BA in journalism or related field. Three years work experience in journalism. Contact Department of Human Resources, General Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. (212) 870-3666.

WANTED—DIRECTOR OF YOUTH, Camping and Outdoor Ministries, for 110 church New Hampshire Conference, United Methodist Church. Responsible for expanding and maintaining effective youth programs locally and statewide. Managing and administering 200 acre lakeside Christian camp for all ages. Part-time 1992. Full-time as of January 1993. Respond with letter of introduction and goals, resume and references by 9-15-91 to: Personnel Search Committee, NH Conference Office, United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 2254, Concord, NH 03302-2254.

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FULL-TIME DIRECTOR of Christian Education for 1200-member church. Will assume responsibilities January 1, 1992. Degree, (must be certified in Christian education.) Responsible for education all age levels, emphasis adult and children's ministries. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Rev. Marshall McQueen, First UMC, P.O. Box 925, Katy, TX 77492-0925.

NEEDED: DIRECTOR OF MUSIC and Fine Arts for Tyler Street UMC, Dallas, Texas. Write Dr. Jim Palmer, 927 West Tenth, Dallas, TX 75208. Call (214) 946-8106.

DIRECTOR, YOUTH MINISTRIES: Full-time, experience preferred, housing/benefits available. Resume to: First United Methodist Church, 121 N. Knights Ave., Brandon, FL 33510. (813) 689-4161/689-4901.

Tough money matters among conference actions

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

United Methodists' annual conference sessions this spring dealt with tough financial matters in the wake of rising expenses and faltering income.

They also took a look at projected programs related to college students, Hispanics, and older adults.

At least five of the denomination's 72 conferences in the United States and Puerto Rico voted to ask General Conference to recommend no increase in general apportionments for the 1993-96 quadrennium.

General Conference will meet May 5-15, 1992, in Louisville, Ky.

Several conferences approved reduced budgets.

A number of conferences approved other action related to finance, including recommendations for:

■ Study of clergy salaries and support structures as they relate to effective ministry and a Disciplinary amendment for a basic salary plan;

■ Removal of the provision for World Service and conference benevolences to be apportioned to the local churches as a single request;

■ Support for a national healthcare program.

Proposed church programs for 1993-96 include a renewed United-Methodist emphasis on campus ministry. Support for "Campus Ministry: Mission at the Center" was reflected in resolutions from at least 21 conferences.

If adopted by General Conference, the program would help bolster United Methodist and ecumenical ministries on campuses of more than 700 private and public colleges in the United States.

The denomination's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry unanimously approved the proposed program in October, citing shrinking numbers of lay and clergy leaders younger than 35.

At least seven conferences expressed support for a national plan to foster United Methodist congregational development and services among Hispanics. The plan, which emphasizes the training and deployment of lay missioners, was adopted in principle in March by the denomination's Committee To Develop a National Plan for Hispanic Ministries.

Other actions suppored:

■ Celebration of the sacraments in local churches by clergy other than ordained elders;

■ Relocation of the denomination's Board of Global Ministries outside New York City.

■ Adoption of the Consultation on Church Union's Covenanting Proposal;

■ Expanded international initiatives;

■ The practice of confirmation and infant dedication and baptism;

■ Establishment of a churchwide Board of Evangelism.

PHOTO COURTESY MEMPHIS CONFERENCE REPORTER EDITION

Air Force honors chief cookie dropper

Kathy Young, United Methodist from Memphis, Tenn., received the American Spirit Award recently for initiating Operation Cookie Drop during the Persian Gulf crisis. Air Force officers helped present their military branch's highest award for civilians to the woman whose idea resulted in 22 tons of home-baked cookies being shipped to military personnel overseas.

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Coming Up At Broadmoor

July 29-August 2	Music & Arts Camp
August 11	Blood Drive
August 11-18	Youth Week
August 28	"Getting to Know You" Church Night
October 1	UMW Luncheon/Style Show
October 12	Lay Ministries Fair

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

This Sunday At Broadmoor

The Rev. Michael Wethey's Message
"God Is Multilingual"
Romans 12:1-8

Anthem:		
8:30	"Sing A New Song (Pethel)	Youth Singers
9:45 & 11:00	"In Praise of God" (Young)	Chancel Choir
Offertory	"The Lord Is My Strength" (Huhn)	Wayne Millet, Tenor

THE BROADMOOR BEACON

Broadmoor United Methodist Church edition

VOLUME 138 NUMBER 9 018130 10230 Mollylea Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815 Telephone: 504-924-6269 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 468 JULY 26, 1991

The Church — Cruise Ship Or Crew Boat?

What is your model of the church? The Bible gives us a variety of models, such as the human body with all its parts coordinated; a household, a family; an outpost of heaven and there are others. A modern model and one that is most common in the minds of the majority of church members is the church as a "cruise ship."

Membership in the church is the ticket to get on aboard and once on board it is the responsibility of the Captain, his officers and crew to make life as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. This cruise ship has ports of call. At ports of call I contact only those places, people and things that keep me comfortable and content. I see the people of these places, but they are of no concern to me except as a means to my end. I board my cruise ship, get involved, in the "on board" activities and sail off into the sunset.

I suggest, that the "crew boat" is a better model for the church, a model more compatible with God's design for the church. The crew boat is designed to carry people and supplies to work sites, to keep them supplied and to accomplish a task. The church is God's crew called and gathered and sent to a work site to create something, to build something, to deliver something. The work sites are all around us, from Baton Rouge to Bangalore. Our task is to choose the work sites, recruit the crews and go.

As the church we live with this tension between being a cruise ship or a crew boat. We prefer to cruise, but God calls us to create crew boats. Here at Broadmoor UMC, through our Council on Ministries and related work areas, we struggle with creating crew boats and crews. Our Vision for today and the future pulls us in that direction. Let us pray, study, and work to build, equip, and provide crew boats and crews for the tasks of the Kingdom.

John Wesley left us his personal creed and I recommend it as our "Creed for a Crew Boat Church."

Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.
Join me on a crew boat.

Your partner in ministry,
Pete Spitzkeit, Associate

Seventh Semi-Annual BUMC Blood Drive Set For August 11

Broadmoor United Methodist Church needs at least 60 acceptable pints of blood donated at its seventh semi-annual blood drive that is to be held Sunday, August 11, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the gym.

We must reach the 60 pint plateau in order to maintain our group assurance status with the Community Blood Center of Louisiana.

Sign-up tables will be found at key locations on the Broadmoor campus on Sundays, July 28 and August 4. While walk-ins will be welcomed on August 11, those who have pre-registered will receive preferential processing. You may also set up an appointment by calling the church office (924-6269).

The technical personnel and equipment will be provided by the Community Blood Center of Louisiana from their Baton Rouge office. The Broadmoor blood drives are sponsored by the United Methodist Men and the UMM blood drive representative is Jay Blackmon.

Give the gift of life, donate blood!

Saturday Evening Worship

July 27, 1991
6:00 p.m., Sanctuary
The Rev. Pete Spitzkeit's Message
"What's the Use of Religion?"
2 Chronicles 29:3

A Time of Appreciation, Team-Building and Fellowship for Everyone Working in the Discipleship Area.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 1991

12:30 p.m., Activities Bldg., Room 4

A Nursery Will Be Provided. Special Entertainment Is Planned. Please call the church office (924-6269) to confirm your reservation.

"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, this is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood, Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

I Corin. 11:23-26

Adopt-A-School Volunteers Are Positive Role Models At Broadmoor Elementary

Top Left: (L-R) Bob Hansen, David Roach, Alex Kovacs and Dave Goldsmith break ground for school beautification project. Top Right: Von Heatherly records volunteer hours for the month. Bottom Left: Lucille Neames listens to student read. Bottom Right: Bettie Lane enjoys helping her students with a project.

Every week, year in and year out, volunteers from our church give loving, caring attention and encouragement to the children at Broadmoor Elementary School. Most of our volunteers have been serving and providing role models since the church adopted the school six years ago. Their dedication has added a dimension to the quality of life for children — both black and white — many of whom come from disadvantaged home environments. At the same time our volunteers have often said they are repaid many times over in experiencing satisfaction and pleasure in helping the children and in receiving their affection.

The main area in which we serve is in **individual tutoring** — helping in math, science, listening to a child read, correcting punctuation and spelling. Some teachers need help with filing or duplicating; help has also been asked for in the computer lab. This type of assistance allows the teacher to proceed with the progress of the entire class. The tremendous appreciation of the teachers and staff is demonstrated each year by the very lovely tea they give for the volunteers.

The library is an area where we provide service: shelving books, cataloguing new books, and in the (fall we help with the Book Fair and Read-Aloud Week.

One dedicated volunteer records monthly the total volunteer hours performed at the school.

Once a year the School Nurse needs help when she tests sight and hearing. Our volunteers conduct the little ones from the classroom to the nurse.

We have helped at the Halloween Fair by providing cakes and cookies to sell.

The big, new project this year drew more men into our volunteer force. We undertook a beautification program, planting and pruning the frontage along Goodwood Boulevard and along the drive. Five of our men dug and planted and pruned in spite of the long rainy period, resulting in the addition of 56 azaleas and spirea and 3 crape myrtle trees. A fellowship developed amongst the men, several of whom had not been acquainted previously. Their enthusiasm extended the job into extensive tree pruning which had not initially been scheduled. Many favorable comments have been received about the improved appearance of "our school." The landscape plan which was a donated service, included a curving garden in front of the sign. The mother of a pupil donated and planted a border of liriope and the children planted annuals in the garden, giving them a feeling of participation. The Youth (UMYF) gave the sign that is placed in the garden — "Beautification sponsored by Broadmoor United Methodist Church." Money for the cost of the shrubs and trees was contributed by various church members, Sunday school classes, our commission, community people and parents of the school children. This effort is truly an outreach ministry — an opportunity for church, school and community to pull together.

Phase II of the beautification program will be the initiation of a Nature Walk this fall in the grounds behind the school which will enhance the environmental studies in the science classes as well as provide a benefit to the community. There will be opportunities for financial contributions toward this project.

Finishing up the year, the Adopt-a-School Committee gives each graduating 5th grade student a colorful flashlight with the following message printed thereon: "MAY EDUCATION BE YOUR LIGHT TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE — THE HOPE OF YOUR ADOPTER, BROADMOOR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH."

We invite all interested volunteers to join us in any of the rewarding jobs at our adopted school. As in years past, we will be called upon when school opens, August 19th, to help by directing and escorting children to their new classrooms. If you would like to join this very special ministry, call the church office and ask for Linda Kersey or you may contact Wilda Kovacs at 927-6526.

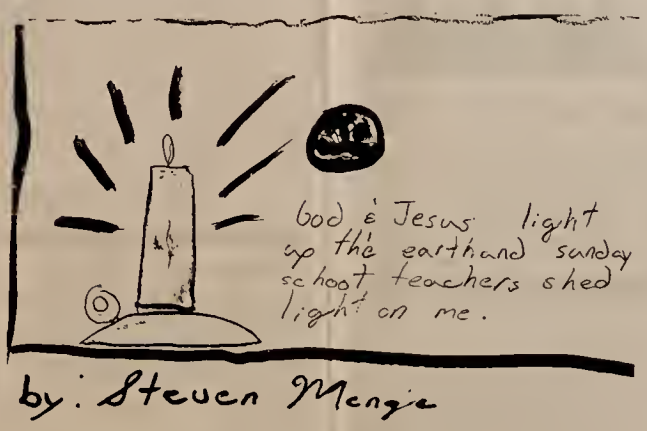
Dave Goldsmith, VIPS Golden Apple Winner

Volunteering at Broadmoor Elementary has helped keep him young, according to David Goldsmith. "I enjoy being with the kids," he said. "I've worked with kids for years and years in the Boy Scouts and Sunday school, and I just enjoy being around them."

Dave was selected from 52 nominees to be one of the seven recipients of the Volunteers in Public Schools' Golden Apple Award.

His volunteer activities at Broadmoor Elementary School range from tutoring to gardening, working with groups as well as individual students. Dave tutors every week in all subject areas. He assists with Book Fairs, Read-Aloud-Week and field trips and currently serves on the School Advisory Council. His volunteer work extended beyond the classroom when he organized a group of volunteers to repair and paint playground equipment, paint classrooms, build bookcases and develop plans for a nature walk at the school. Dave works with the students in such a way that they not only learn, but develop a better self-image and a sense of self-worth and a better attitude toward learning and trusting other people.

Dave became active at Broadmoor Elementary when BUMC adopted that school through the VIPS program six years ago.



A NEW NIGHT IS COMING

Circle

Our Life Together

In The Hospital

Our church staff has been notified that those listed below are in the hospital or have been hospitalized recently. Our prayers are with them and their families

Ellen Davenport
Harold Denning
Shari Ferrara
George Lambert
Pearl Lawson
Cecil Lewis
Dean Toler
Celeste Toney

Our Attendance

Church Membership	4,208
Sunday Worship 7/14/91	1,183
Sunday School 7/14/91	762
UMYF 7/14/91	60

Our Stewardship

Offering Received 7/14/91 $23,344.64

We Say Thanks To:

Acolytes — Telisa Byers and Hollee Dunaway; Erin White and Missy Wilkinson; Zac Woodring and Grant Carroll who served 7/14/91.

Greeters — Wayne and Mary Wroten and Michael, Matthew and Kathryn; Bill Woodard; Farrell and Joyce Fabre who served 7/14/91.

We Welcome Our New Members

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde (Isabel) Thompson, Jr., 19303 South Lakeway Ave., 70810, PH: 755-0031. Clyde is retired and Isabel is a housewife.

Infant Arrival

Congratulations to Dr. and Mrs. Mark Henry (Mary Lacour) Sibley on the birth of their daughter, Haley Catherine Sibley, born June 21, 1991. Paternal grandparents are Dr. and Mrs. Lonnie (Eleanor) Sibley.

Congratulations to Dr. and Mrs. Gregory (Shari) Ferrara on the birth of their son, Bradley Raymond Ferrara, born July 17, 1991. Maternal grandmother is Mrs. Sue Ferrara.

Weddings

Cherryl Lynn Botos and Michael Joseph Chenevert were married July 12, 1991, by the Rev. Pete Spitzkeit in the sanctuary.

Karen Elizabeth Comish and Daniel Ray Sikes were married July 13, 1991, by the Revs. Dawn S. Liphart and Pete Spitzkeit in the sanctuary.

We Offer Our Deepest Sympathy To:

The family and friends of Mr. Francis G. Prophit who died July 11, 1991.

Miss Pam Warnock and family in the death of her grandmother, Mrs. Bertha E. Cochran of Forest, IN.

Memorials

In memory of Mr. Jesse Clarence Cox, brother of Mrs. Myrtle Morgan, given by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney P. Kersey, Jr.

In memory of Mrs. Audrey Poe Kelley, given by UMW Circle #7.

In memory of Mrs. Katherine Kersey, given by her family.

In memory of Mr. Orion Litchfield, father of Mrs. Elmer Litchfield, given by Mr. and Mrs. Travis Nichols and given by Mr. and Mrs. Bobbie B. Crump, Jr.

In memory of Mrs. Kiyoko Nagai, aunt of Mrs. Charlotte Fitzsimons, given by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney P. Kersey, Jr.

In memory of Mr. Joe Vance, grandfather of Mr. Thomas Bentley, given by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney P. Kersey, Jr.

In memory of Mrs. Lila Wilson, aunt of Mrs. Laverne Payte, given by Mr. and Sidney P. Kersey, Jr.

Help Wanted

Temporary Custodian
Mid-August thru February
30-Hour Week
General Custodial Duties
Call Foye Terrell (924-6269)

"The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to the men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all."

Ecclesiastes 9:11

Editorial

We should take losses personally

"Statistics are not merely 'cold' numbers; they represent the tears and joys, the sufferings and successes of ordinary people."

Keep that recent comment from a government economist in mind as you ponder the most recent statistics regarding United Methodism's U.S membership (see UMR, July 19).

Granted, some plusses appear in the 1990 figures—for example, more annual conferences showing membership gains and a smaller net membership loss.

The bottom line, however, is the "same ol' same ol' "; Our church's overall U.S. membership continued to decline in 1990 at the same rate as in the preceding two years.

That's where the economist's point about "cold numbers" becomes relevant: Our encounter year after year with declining church membership is not rightly an abstract, "numbers" exercise.

Rather, when we consider annual membership loss—some 2 million since 1968—we need to recognize that we're talking about the statistician's "ordinary people": living, breathing, laughing, crying people who, like us, have a deep need for meaning and spiritual fulfillment in life.

After nearly 25 years of steady loss, we trivialize matters merely to say we're "declining." Friends, in Christ, our church is slowly dying. Lifeblood—more than 60,000 souls per year or an average of 165 per day—is draining out of our part of Christ's Body!

One of our tasks as Christians is discernment—that is, reading the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3). Regarding membership statistics, that includes discerning the human implications of otherwise impersonal numbers and responding accordingly.

No conscientious Christian, upon seeing a photograph of a suffering sister or brother in Christ, would shrug off the image as being of no consequence.

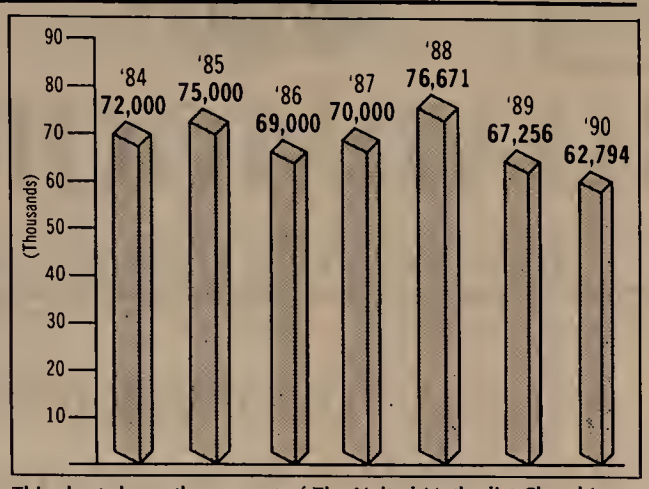
Why, then, should we respond differently when the "photograph" is a statistical chart and the "image" is of not one, but thousands of human souls who no longer receive spiritual food at our church's table, enrich us with their faith, nor strengthen our corporate outreach?

We should support churchwide efforts such as the Council of Bishops' "Vital Congregations/Faithful Disciples" initiative and the General Board of Discipleship's "Growth Plus" plan for building up sagging congregations in both numbers and spirit. Likewise, several annual conferences are making significant efforts to promote church renewal.

Such general efforts stand little chance of succeeding, however, unless we as individual Christians and congregations "get personal" and respond to our own local church's membership loss for what it is.

Not a lifeless statistic, but a spiritual tragedy that pains God and diminishes us as God's people.

If your local church is not losing more members than it's gaining, praise God and pray for God's renewing guidance in the vast majority of local churches across our denomination that can't make that claim.



This chart shows the amount of The United Methodist Church's net membership loss each year for the past seven years. After nearly 25 years of steady loss, we trivialize matters merely to say we're "declining." Many of our churches are slowly dying.

My Witness

God gives us much to do even after we're 'retired'

By ROBERT J. HAWTHORNE

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Robert J. Hawthorne lives in San Jose, California and is a retired member of the California-Nevada Annual Conference.

Walter Cronkite didn't know the half of it when he spoke about retirement:

"You wake up in the morning with absolutely nothing to do, and by noon you're behind schedule."

Wrong. You wake up in the morning already behind schedule. There are more things to do than you're going to do, and you know it, and that's part of the fun.

Retirement is the state in which you can choose your behindness.

Before the big step, people asked me what I was going to "do." I found the question odd. I thought retirement was about "not doing" for a change.

Almost a year into the role, it still feels good to relax, smell the flowers, take too long with the morning paper. My wife and I did some pre-retirement counseling and as a result find we get along pretty well together, a major dividend.

Following the bridal formula

But just to satisfy myself and those who asked, I'm "doing" too. What I'm doing follows the old formula for what brides wear:

■ "Something old": We're both still singing in a large choral group, nearly a quarter century of it now. We got a standing ovation in Carnegie Hall two years ago, a thrill to remember. I also kept one "old" service commitment, staying on the board of the county Council of Churches.

■ "Something new": Helping get food out to needy folks at a downtown Catholic social service agency one morning a week is new. So is involvement in Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, where we help affirm a misunderstood minority and fellow parents. It feels like a cutting edge for our time.

■ "Something borrowed": We're frequent playmates with four young grandchildren because all of our kids live nearby. We're lucky that way. But you know what they say: grandparents can return the little darlings when they're worn out (no, not the children). With less energy than they have, we affirm that's good.

■ "Something blue": Blue is just one of the colors on my palette as I learn watercolor painting. I may not become Grandpa Moses but it's fun trying. Oils were an earlier hobby, and I'll probably get back to that too. Blue is also the color of the California sky much of the time when we're gardening, tree pruning, picking apples. Blue is the color I try to keep the swimming pool, by dint of chemicals and care.

Happy and active in church

Additionally, Gene Anna and I are happy and active in the United Methodist church we served for seven years before retiring. My wonderful successor asked us back, and she enriches our lives, as does the community. We do some teaching and preaching to balance the equation at times.

So retirement is a marvelous gift a new and welcome phase of life. I don't know whether we're happier "doing" or just "being," but for both we're grateful to the God who is ever present and always good.

Letters to the Editor

Religion shouldn't blind us to fairness

Your emotion-charged editorial concerning allegiance to God in the Boy Scout Oath is commendable as a religious tract (see UMR, July 12).

After all, religion is mostly emotional (i.e., spiritual). So is life. But we should not permit emotion to blind us to fairness and equity.

If we restrict the Boy Scout movement to those who believe in God as we do, we should rename it "The Boy Scouts of Christianity" or "The Boy Scouts of Yahweh" or some such suitable title.

However, as long as it remains "The Boy Scouts of America," it must be receptive to all Americans, even "unbelievers." Your proposed "right to require a pledge of duty to God" must, in fairness, be juxtaposed with the right to decline such a pledge.

The question whether the organization is public or private seems to be answered by its name. Of course, courts are unpredictable. But we must be prepared for an adjudication of the pending suit in favor of the California family plaintiff.

Sam Miller
Tullahoma, Tennessee

Editorial challenged

I am writing in response to the July 5 editorial headlined, "Pop culture, the real world and Christianity."

The editorial implies that you have to see a movie, play or drama to know if it is good or worthy of criticism.

This is like saying you must go into a bar to know whether you should stay away from it.

In the Scriptures, Paul warns us to stay away from temptation. If you read reviews of movies, they indicate what the contents are going to be and give a rating. This should be sufficient information to make a decision about going to see a particular movie.

Occasionally, you go to one you wish you hadn't. But why subject yourself to those that are obviously of poor content? Why immerse yourself in lewdness or pornography, things you would turn off in your home?

It only takes one bad apple to ruin a basketful. If you deliberately expose yourself to rottenness, it is highly probable you will begin to deteriorate.

We have to live in this world. We do not have to become worldly to know what is right or what is wrong.

Rose Fischer
Montgomery City, Missouri

'Proper' words questioned

What's in a word?

Once in a while I hear church people say that a prayer is not valid unless it ends "in Jesus' name" or "through Jesus," as if proper words and formulas make a prayer that is heard by God.

The Lord's Prayer does not end with "in Jesus' name" or "through Jesus." Furthermore, St. Paul writes ". . . for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be put into words" (Romans 8:26).

Are Christians who speak in tongues using the proper words? It seems to me that the most personal and important part of religion has to do with the ineffable where proper word formulas are not applicable.

Robert J. Viall
Neptune Beach, Florida

We need not ponder lies

In the July 5 editorial you asked the question, "How can we credibly advocate life in Christ if we don't know and confront the worldly alternatives?"

You imply that we Christians should expose ourselves to "provocative movies and other forms of popular culture."

Really? Why?

Ponder this. Agents for the U. S. Department of Treasury study "real" dollars for two years. They know what the "real thing" is by exposing themselves to the truth and not the counterfeit. Their heads are not stuck in the sand, but in the truth. By studying and knowing the whole truth they can immediately recognize what is only part truth. They never see a counterfeit bill. They don't need to in order to complete their mission.

We need not ponder lies in order to tell the truth to a sinful and broken world. Enough time is spent dealing with "life's unsavory aspects" without advocating the exploring of more "worldly alternatives."

Do you honestly feel that today's Christians are so blindly dedicated, eyes-on-the-goal, and one-minded that we must learn to interact creatively "with various forms of popular culture?"

In truth, today's Christianity is mediocre or luke-warm enough. Creativity is needed in strengthening our commitment to knowing and living the truth rather than studying and exchanging counterfeit alternatives among each other.

John Hyde
Dallas, Texas

If you had asked . . .

I was disappointed but not surprised by the Reporter's failure to seek the reaction of gay, lesbian and bisexual United Methodists for its June 28 story about the Presbyterian General Assembly.

The Assembly rejected a study committee report that, among other findings, affirmed the validity of loving relationships between people of the same gender. It is just one more example of how society and church discount our lives by acting as if we did not exist—even when we are the subject of the story!

Here is what I would have said if I had been asked: The vote of the Presbyterian General Assembly demonstrates well how little rational analysis has to do with decisions of this kind. The most likely cause for this outcome is one's fear—irrational, gut-wrenching fear of emotional and physical attraction to people of the same gender.

Fortunately for us all, the Gospel offers freedom from both irrational fear and bondage to self-serving conservatism, as well as institutional idolatry. I continue to pray that The United Methodist Church will not, like Lot's wife of old, be paralyzed by attachment to what God calls it to leave behind.

I believe the Spirit of a loving, liberating God is leading us relentlessly toward a better place.

Morris L. Floyd
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Here I Stand

Giving the gift of time

By MARY APPLEGATE HILL

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Mary Applegate Hill is a member of Atlanta United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Ill. (Northern Illinois Annual Conference).

How often I have heard "I couldn't do what you are doing."

Yes, you could. Thirteen years ago, when our son was born with cerebral palsy, we weren't given a choice. No, we weren't special. We were ordinary people, like you, without any exceptional knowledge, gifts or skills.

What we know now we have learned. We have never wanted sympathy, but we need other people's support to cope with the many challenges we face on a daily basis.

Here's what we've learned and what every Christian and church family should know:

The greatest gift that you can give a parent of a special child is the gift of time. It is extremely difficult to find someone who is willing and able to care for our child.

Parents need time away from their children to recharge their batteries and keep their relationship in good shape.

Parents need time with their handicapped child alone without the "normal" siblings. But the normal siblings also need time alone with their parents.

There are other ways that you can make our days a little easier. When you see us out in public, try not to stare at our children even though they may look different. Educate your children, don't jerk them away from us like we had a communicable disease.

Please try to treat our children as normally as possible. Don't talk down to them or pat them on the head. Many of them are of average intelligence or gifted.

Sometimes, we wonder if it is worth the struggle for us and for our son. We almost lost him at birth—he was saved only by heroic measures.

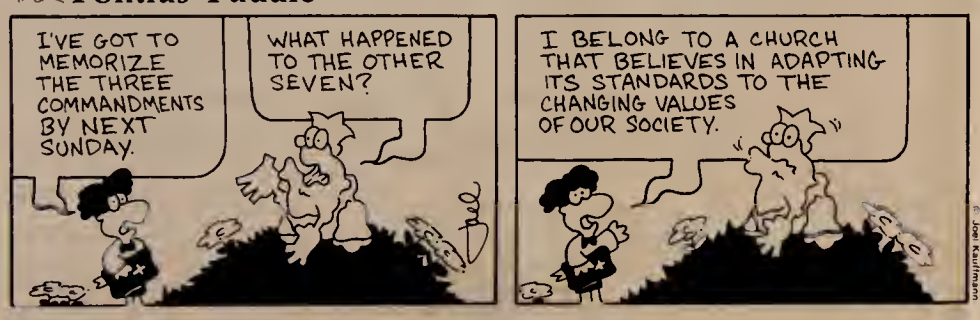
My answer came about a year ago when my son was writing a speech to be given on Laity Sunday at our local United Methodist Church.

He wrote:

"God has done so many things for me I can't name them all. The two major things He has done for me are letting me live and giving me a sister."

Yes, it is a challenge and a struggle. But making his life the best it can be is worth every effort we can put into it.

Pontius' Puddle



What others are saying

"The day of the professional pastor is over. The day of the missionary pastor has come."

—Kennon Callahan, author, "Effective Church Leadership."

* * *

"What is there to stop us from being the best? Each pastor should serve in such a way that every church would love to have that pastor. And each church should be in ministry in such a way that every pastor would love to serve that church. Who knows what could happen if we truly served the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength?"

—The Rev. Daniel H. Ling, district superintendent, Binghamton, N.Y. (Wyoming Annual Conference)

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* _____ *Verse* _____ : _____

(Last week's answer: Hebrews 12:11)

Readings for week of July 29

Monday: Psalms 32:1-5
Tuesday: Psalms 32:6-11
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 12:1-14
Thursday: John 6:1-15
Friday: John 6:16-21
Saturday: Ephesians 3:1-13
Sunday: Ephesians 3:14-21

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Call collect or write to:

Bruce Bally or Christine Bishop, UMR Special Editions, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275, (214) 630-6495.

Faith watch

AIDS FIGURES UPDATED: The World Health Organization estimates that 9 million adults are infected with human immunodeficiency virus, which causes AIDS. By the year 2000, up to 40 million people are projected to be infected, said an AIDS ministries network report prepared by **Cathie Lyons**, head of the health and welfare ministries department of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. A total of 366,455 cases of AIDS was reported from 180 countries by June 1, although the actual number of infected people may be as much as 50 percent larger because of delays in reporting.

DEAN NAMED AT DREW: The Rev. **Robin W. Lovin** has been named dean of the theological school at United Methodist-related Drew University in Madison, N.J., effective Aug. 1. Dr. Lovin succeeds the Rev. **Thomas H. Ogletree**, who left the post a year ago to become dean of Yale Divinity School. Dr. Lovin also will hold the rank of professor of ethics and society at the university. He has been associate professor of religious ethics at Chicago Divinity School.

SANCTUARY SUIT END SOUGHT: Top officials of two denominations have asked the U.S. Justice Department to close a six-year litigation based on the "sanctuary movement." The Rev. **James Andrews**, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Bishop **Herbert Chilstrom**, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, asked the Justice Department not to appeal a recent court order limiting the government's right to monitor worship services. Churches filed the suit claiming violation of First Amendment rights in 1986 after government spies infiltrated Arizona worship services seeking evidence of wrongdoing by churches or church people in giving sanctuary to refugees from Central and South America.

U.S./SOVIET PRAYER VIGIL SET: A joint prayer vigil was planned in the United States and in the Soviet Union during the summit meeting between U.S. President **George Bush** and Soviet President **Mikhail Gorbachev** at the end of July. The prayer vigil was jointly announced by the Rev. **Joan B. Campbell**, chief executive of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., and Metropolitan **Kirill** of Smolensk, a leader of the Russian Orthodox Church. Ms. Campbell said that prayers will focus on gratitude for "the dramatic reduction in tension between our two nations" and that the potential "of a peace dividend may in fact be used to deal with the substantial economic problems facing our countries."

900-NUMBER OFFERS COMFORT: To the mix of hard facts, horoscopes and advice offered at the end of "900" telephone numbers, some mainline Christians add another choice: comfort and inspiration. The Rev. **Warner A. Hutchinson**, a minister of the United Church of Christ and spokesman for that Philadelphia group, said the service aims to offer an alternative to the "shrill voices of religious extremists" by being supportive and offering hope and comfort to people who dial 1-900-454-2300, at $2.75 for two minutes—time enough to listen to one of three messages.

SECULAR WRITING CITED: **Richard Dujardin** of the "Providence Journal-Bulletin" received the $2,500 John Templeton Reporter of the Year Award from the 150-member secular Religion Newswriters Association at its annual meeting July 13 in Phoenix. **Michelle Bearden**, formerly with the "St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times," won the religion writing award for the second year in a row. With **Tom Billitteri** as religion editor, the St. Petersburg paper was named best religion section. **Rex Rutkoski** of the "Valley News Dispatch" in Tarentum, Pa., was named outstanding religion writer in publications under 50,000 circulation.

Churchwide health-care plan proposed

Standardized benefits, some 'insulation' from skyrocketing costs envisioned

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

BOSTON—An unprecedented proposal for covering health-care costs of about 115,000 United Methodist clergy, lay workers, and their spouses and dependents was unveiled July 16.

Task force members who developed the massive churchwide plan believe it will standardize benefits while offering at least some insulation from the volatility of skyrocketing medical costs.

Those costs have been increasing by an average of 30 percent annually for the past four years, according to a special report by the Reporter published last year.

Parish to planet crimp

At stake for the 8.8 million United Methodist members in the United States is an outlay of funds to protect their professional leaders that is crimping other ministries from parish to planet. Outlay for 1991 is believed to be in the $175 million range.

In 1988, the church's top legislative General Conference asked the church's General Board of Pensions to study the "feasibility of a churchwide medical insurance program." A 22-member task force headed by Robert W. Stevens of Seattle began work in 1989.

The Board of Pensions will decide in November whether to send the task force proposal to the 1992 General Conference. If finally approved there, the plan would go into effect Jan. 1, 1994.

"We believe this is a sound, long-term plan" that provides "opportunities to stabilize premium increases, provide uniform benefits and enhance claim predictability," Mr. Stevens said in introducing the task force's work. He is chief fiscal officer of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference and vice president of the Board of Pensions.

Cafeteria-style program

Participation in the "cafeteria-style" program would be mandatory for all annual conferences, national church agencies and certain other salary-paying units.

A broad range of other denominational employers and individual clergy and lay workers, and their dependents, could take part on a voluntary basis.

Medical and dental coverage would be provided. Participants could choose among several levels of protection with varying annual deductibles.

At present, coverage for active and retired clergy is provided individually by the 72 annual conferences in the United States and Puerto Rico with benefits and costs that vary substantially. Bishops, lay employees and clergy not appointed to local churches are covered by a variety of other programs.

Mr. Stevens and other task force members have emphasized that the plan is keyed to participants' developing a "wellness" mindset.

Price tag unknown yet

Still to be determined is the price tag of the proposed program for a particular annual conference or denominational agency. Regional differences in health-care costs are among factors to be taken into account in pricing the program.

The task force recommends that the Board of Pensions serve as plan administrator. A specific carrier has not been proposed.

Mr. Stevens said the plan offers the possibility of protection from annual increases that recently have ranged as high as 40 percent to 50 percent for some church units.

"Some overall immediate savings (are) to be realized after the initial start-up period," Mr. Stevens said, "but to imply that we can stop the general inflationary rate of medical cost increases would be naive."

Diane Pinney, Board of Pensions treasurer, said the plan would include "no subsidy from pensions funds," and care would be exercised "to keep a distinct wall between pensions funds and health-care funds." Start-up costs would be borrowed from an outside source or from unrestricted funds managed by the board.

'Network' a key

One key feature of the plan is the so-called "network" principle of medical care.

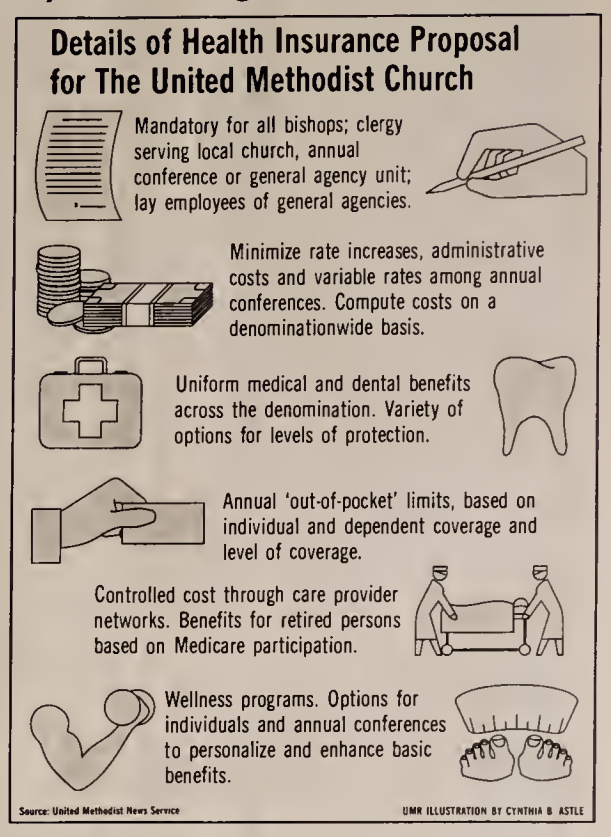
Under this concept, individuals will have complete freedom to choose their own doctors or hospitals, but benefits will be reduced if that provider is not "in network."

A number of such networks exist, the task force said, and it is estimated that about half the church's clergy could be covered by as few as two of these.

The "in-network" concept was one of the most bothersome, particularly in conferences with sparsely populated rural areas.

A general lifetime maximum benefit of $1 million for any one individual is proposed, to increase as medical costs increase.

The possibility of a self-insured program was rejected because of high costs that would be incurred under some state laws. A self-funded plan could be considered in the future when reserves are adequate and the regulatory climate improves, task force officials said.



Mission issue: Keep privilege or serve the poor?

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

ATLANTA—The critical issue for The United Methodist Church is whether it will keep its present status and privilege or will give ministries to the poor and dispossessed who are hungry for the Gospel.

That is the assessment of the Rev. Robert Harman, top world missions executive for the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

Dr. Harman offered that assessment while addressing United Methodist missionaries, mission interpreters and administrators during the 1991 Missionary Conference. The sessions were held July 11-14 on the Emory University campus in Atlanta.

Participants included United Methodist missionaries on leave from assignments in some 27 countries. Included were nearly a dozen people from outside the U.S. who serve in mission areas other than their native lands.

In setting the context for United Methodist mission in this decade, Dr. Harman said we must realize that some of our western mission strategies have not fulfilled Jesus' missionary call. Western values of wealth, affluence and power will be brought up against an appropriate judgment if we do not change, he said.

"Jesus calls us not to lay up our earthly treasures," said Dr. Harman. "We will miss the treasures in heaven because we do not give our possessions to the poor.

"Is a western mission strategy based on western theory of affluence ever going to penetrate the strategies of the urban poor?" Dr. Harman asked the missionary group.

"How long are we going to ignore the persons in shantytowns and garbage dumps that penetrate our cities? How long are we going to ignore the ones who are most responsive to the good news?

"Our solutions as a church depend on our love for the poor."

War-torn Mozambique 'captures' missioner twice

Reporter Staff Special

ATLANTA—When Dr. Marian A. Jones retired from private practice as a pediatrician in Billings, Mont., she asked the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries for a place to serve as a short-term volunteer-in-mission.

"I thought I'd like to help some children in Africa who do not receive medical care on a regular basis," she said.

She chose a tough assignment: War-torn Mozambique, in southeastern Africa.

Dr. Jones told her story this month during the Missionary Conference in Atlanta.

"Just short of my 67th birthday, I went to Chicuque Hospital in Mozambique as a volunteer-in-mission for three months," said Dr. Jones.

"I found it to be a very busy place for a pediatrician—so many children suffer from malnutrition and other illnesses.

"In many years of pediatric practice in Montana, I had never seen so much death and suffering among children."

After returning to the states from her short-term service, Dr. Jones told herself: "If I were only younger, I could go into missionary service."

Despite some doubts, she contacted the mission board about longer-term service and was approved as a missionary to Africa.

Following language study in Lisbon, Portugal, she returned to Chicuque in July 1989.

Now, exactly two years later, she has "retired" again.

During a special retirement banquet for her and 21 other United Methodist missionaries, the Rev. Zebediah Marewangepo, staff executive for United Methodist ministries in southern Africa, described the staff's surprise when Dr. Jones called to request full-time mission service so soon after her medical retirement and short-term mission service.

"We thought the Mozambique civil war would discourage Dr. Jones from going back to Chicuque. But we were wrong."

Pointing upward, Mr. Marewangepo said, "She told us, 'The boss said to me, "Go back!"' That is what she did.

"So compassionate was Dr. Jones that she started a fund for the children at Chicuque who had no food and no place to go once they left the hospital. We hope so many children in Mozambique are thinking of her, though she is here in the U.S."

—*DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL*

Marian A. Jones
. . .'retired' twice

UMCOR assesses Philippine loss

United Methodist News Service

Two leading United Methodists from the U.S. are making on-site assessments of damage suffered by an estimated half-million Filipinos following the eruptions of Mount Pinatubo volcano.

The Rev. R. Randy Day, who recently went to the Philippines for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, said the people not only need emergency supplies but also emotional and spiritual care from the "fear, anxiety and high stress from living on the slope of a quiet mountain suddenly transformed into a violent volcano."

UMCOR's interim associate general secretary, the Rev. Bruce Weaver, plans to visit the country July 30-Aug. 1 to consult with United Methodist leaders there on ways that UMCOR can assist in long-term rehabilitation.

The June eruption of Mount Pinatubo, 60 miles north of Manila, has been identified as the biggest volcanic eruption of the 20th century (see UMR, June 28.)

Mr. Day, a pastor from Ridgefield, Conn., who did graduate study in the Philippines years ago, reported to UMCOR his amazement in seeing once-lush farmlands covered "with a grayish-white blanket of grainy sand and ash as far as the eye could see."

The five United Methodist districts affected were Zambales, Pampanga West, South Tarlac, Western Luzon Mission and Bataan.

In the Bataan District, at least 18,000 farmers and 13,000 fishermen had their livelihood destroyed by falling ash.

Much church-related property was destroyed, including about 80 United Methodist churches and 25 United Church of Christ churches, historically related to the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Church members have been helping one another through the crisis and "the bishops and superintendents have been hands-on leaders to their pastors," Mr. Day reported.

"The pastors, in turn, have served and are faithfully serving their people."

One pastor, he said, is living in his small church office and helping distribute limited relief supplies from the ash-covered church grounds.

In addition, United Methodist churches not directly affected by the volcano have organized to dispatch emergency supplies and medical and work teams to stricken areas.

The United Methodist Emergency Advance Number to assist the Philippines is 240225-1, with donations earmarked for the Mount Pinatubo Emergency.

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Wesley Covenant Service researched back to original

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—John Wesley's Covenant Service drew much comment last week from the committee drafting a proposed new United Methodist Book of Worship (see related story elsewhere in this issue).

The Covenant Service that has been a popular United Methodist New Year's Eve service for a number of years turns out not to have been written by John Wesley, the Rev. Andy Langford told the committee. Mr. Langford is a staff member of the church's General Board of Discipleship.

The service was a 19th century British adaptation of the Wesley Covenant Service that was revised again in the 20th century, he said.

The 1945 Methodist Book of Worship printed the latter revision, and thousands of copies in pamphlet form have been sold in the belief that the service was, indeed, written by Wesley, Mr. Langford said.

The current Book of Worship committee desired to return to the original, and Bishop Ole Borgen, faculty member at Asbury Theological Seminary, researched and submitted the original Wesley Covenant Service for inclusion.

The Worship Book committee report goes next to the church's General Board of Discipleship this fall for review and possible amendment.

If approved there, the committee's report is expected to go to the 1992 General Conference.

—*DIANE HUIE BALAY*

Bishop favors no applause in worship

United Methodist News Service

During recent sessions of the United Methodist West Virginia Annual Conference, presiding Bishop William B. Grove explained why he thinks applause during worship is inappropriate.

"It turns the church into a theater," he said. "And . . . it confuses people about where the gift has come from."

Bishop Grove said "Amen" or "Hallelujah" are more appropriate responses to acknowledge gratitude for "the gift of a voice or voices" during worship.

He expressed particular concern about what children learn when they are applauded for singing during worship.

"They think you applaud because you think they're good," he said.

Children's questions about why someone says "Amen" provide "a teaching moment," he said.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

EVANGELISM CONGRESS: Orlando, Fla., has been chosen as the site for the 1992 United Methodist Congress on Evangelism. The Jan. 13-16 conference will offer lectures, seminars and workshops on church growth, planning, visitation, reaching singles, attracting "baby boomers," youth ministry and other topics. For details, write the Rev. **David Brazelton**, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-0840.

LIBRARIAN HONORED: The Church and Synagogue Library Association has honored **Helen Sheets**, librarian at Epworth United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, with its "Outstanding Congregational Librarian Award." The award is presented in recognition of distinguished service to a congregation and/or community through devotion to a congregational library.

RESEARCHER DIES: Not all editions of the Reporter received the news story published June 21 reporting the death June 9 of the Rev. **Robert L. Wilson**, sociologist and researcher on the Duke Divinity School faculty. Dr. Wilson, 66, died of bone cancer after a lengthy illness. His book, "What's Ahead for Old First Church?" is credited with changing the way urban sociologists think about center-city church institutions. He was director of research for the church's General Board of Global Ministries for 12 years before going to Duke.

LIFTED TOO SOON?: President Bush's July 10 decision to lift trade and investment sanctions against South Africa provoked criticism recently from some United Methodists who called the move premature. "The lifting of sanctions should not come before freedom is achieved," said the Rev. **Joshua Lebelo**, a black South African exile and a United Methodist pastor in Easton, Md. **Timothy Smith**, a United Methodist who is executive director of the New York-based Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, said that he does not think companies will be eager to rush back into South Africa. "Companies will continue to look over their shoulders in this country because of the economic pressure that still exists from the religious community," he said.

Worship Book panel gets response from congregational service leaders

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—The committee preparing a proposed new United Methodist Book of Worship learned last week that there's a lot of appreciation for its work throughout the church.

They learned it in part through a question-and-answer session with some worship leaders attending the concurrent national meeting of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and the Other Arts (see related story below.)

These are some of the kinds of people who will put the book to work in local churches if the book is approved by the church's 1992 General Conference.

The leaders responded basically positively to the committee's work.

So have some recipients of sample editions of the proposed new Book of Worship. Samples were distributed to annual conference worship leaders, lay and clergy, and past General Conference delegates.

Committee discussions continued to include some uneasiness centering around just how inclusive in language and cultural diversity the book should be.

The committee has solicited material from a wide diversity of sources and has kept its promise to include them. However, several selections were questioned by committee members.

The Green Corn Ceremony, a Native American service, was the most controversial partly because it is unusual in a way that some members suggested was "uncomfortable" and it includes the use of tobacco.

If the service is included, it will be the first time it has appeared in print.

The Rev. Lois Neal, a Cherokee and a member of the committee, supported inclusion of the material.

"We need to expose our brothers and sisters to different ways of worship," she said. "A lot of times, we are afraid to reach out and risk, to change."

The committee agreed that the Green Corn Ceremony needed to be shortened before being included in the Book of Worship.

Language to describe the Holy Trinity continues to confront the Worship Book committee. With one exception, the committee has used the traditional trinitarian language of Father, Son and Holy Ghost in the general services section of the proposed book for such events as weddings, funerals, ordinations, baptisms and holy communion.

The one place that an alternative to the trinitarian formula is proposed is in the service to commission missionaries. This was reportedly done at the insistence of the church's General Board of Global Ministries which wanted Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost used instead.

The Worship Book committee agreed that the 1992 General Conference should decide which language is to be used.

In the book's section on occasional prayers and services, God is addressed in many ways.

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Liturgical danger Sylvia Bryant of Teaneck, N.J., praises God via dance at sunrise over Lake Junaluska. She was a featured performer at the national meeting of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts (see story below).

Worship/arts gathering reflects Native American theme

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Singing, ringing, laughing, dancing, praying. . . .

Doing all of those things and more, some 1,500 worship leaders and local church musicians gathered recently at Lake Junaluska.

They were attending the national meeting of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts, held every four years.

In keeping with the setting deep in the Cherokee country of the Smoky Mountains, the worship services reflected a Native American theme.

Native American poetry, prayers and rituals were used. Storytelling by the Rev. John E. Sumwalt, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Kenosha, Wisc., was used for the sermons.

Much of the worship materials were taken from "Voices: Native American Hymns and Worship Resources," scheduled for publication this fall.

Throughout the week, expert clinicians taught participants new ways to enrich worship in their local congregations through choirs, handbells, drama, liturgy, dance and visual arts.

Each evening, the tabernacle at Lake Junaluska was filled to capacity for concerts.

Concert highlights included:

■ The Rev. Carlton Young's setting of Martin Luther King's speech "I Have a Dream" with Cynthia Wilson-Felder, soprano soloist; Sylvia Bryant, liturgical dancer; and Dr. Young at the piano.

Ms. Wilson-Felder is on the staff of Hamilton Park United Methodist Church in Dallas; Ms. Bryant is from Teaneck, N.J.; and Dr. Young is on the staff of the Scaritt-Bennett Center in Nashville.

■ Adult choir concert under direction of Andre Thomas, director of choral activities at Florida State University School of Music in Tallahassee, Fla.

■ Advanced handbells under direction of Felix Thompson, diaconal minister of music at St. James United Methodist Church in Little Rock, Ark.

The fellowship honored longtime leader in church music Roger Deschner for his service to the denomination and to church music. The "Roger Deschner Award" will be given to an outstanding musician at each national meeting.

Mr. Deschner, an internationally recognized authority on hymns of John and Charles Wesley, is associate professor of church music at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas. He served as secretary of the Hymnal Revision Committee.

UMR receives $500,000 Challenge Grant

Mabee Foundation action stimulates $60,000 gift for new Communications Center

Trustees of the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla., issued a $500,000 Challenge Grant earlier this month for construction of the new United Methodist Reporter Communications Center.

A swift initial response to that challenge came in the form of a $60,000 commitment from the Joe B. and Louise P. Cook Foundation of Temple, Texas (see related story at right).

The two gifts increase funds raised to date for the Reporter's new facilities to $2.75 million toward a $4.2 million goal.

To receive the Mabee Foundation grant, the remaining $1.45 million must be raised in gifts and pledges no later than July 9, 1992.

DALLAS—An architect's rendering depicts the front of the planned United Methodist Reporter Communications Center. A $500,000 Challenge Grant from the Mabee Foundation of Tulsa and a $60,000 gift from the Joe B. and Louise P. Cook Foundation of Temple, Texas increased funds raised for the new facilities to $2.75 million on a $4.2 million goal.

'Just the boost we need'

"This is the boost we have been needing to propel us toward completion of our fund-raising efforts and the beginning of construction," said David Rooke of Kerrville, Texas. Mr. Rooke chairs the Joint Building Committee drawn from the UMR Foundation Board of Trustees and the UMR Governing Board.

Mr. Rooke, former chief executive of Dow Chemical U.S.A., said that UMR Foundation Board members committed themselves at the group's May meeting to a successful response upon receipt of a major challenge grant.

"That opportunity now is ours to fulfill," he said.

The Rev. Lycurgus M. Starkey Jr. of St. Louis, chair of the Reporter's Governing Board, expressed excitement about the challenge grant.

"This creates a concrete opportunity for people who appreciate the Reporter to insure that our church will continue to have a strong, credible news medium and voice for renewal in the 21st century," Dr. Starkey said.

Need to beat deadline

"We need to approach this challenge as if we don't have a full year to achieve it," The Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, Reporter Editor and Chief Executive, said in announcing the Mabee Foundation grant to the UMR staff.

"With the church's General Conference coming up during the Spring of 1992 and construction costs on the increase, we need to secure the remaining gifts and pledges necessary to begin construction before the end of this year.

"We won't have to have all the money in hand but we will have to know where it will come from if we are to accomplish the goal of building our new facilities debt free," Dr. Dunnam said.

The Rev. Sanford Coon, President of the UMR Foundation, said, "Our plan is to look first to our UMR Foundation Board for leadership and our Governing Board for support in finding 160 United Methodists who are capable of giving $1,000 or more to support effective use of media for telling the story of our faith."

In addition to 100 gifts of $1,000, he cited a need for 30 gifts of $5,000, 15 gifts of $10,000, 5 gifts of $25,000, 3 gifts of $50,000, 2 gifts of $100,000, one gift of $150,000 and two gifts of $250,000, in order to meet the Mabee challenge.

Anyone can be involved

For those who wish to contribute to the Communications Center but are not in a position to give $1,000 or more, Mr. Coon noted a continuing opportunity for individuals and church groups to contribute "stepping stones of faith."

The new facility's exterior walls will be constructed of more than 20,000 of the 8″ by 16″ split-face blocks. The cost of each "stepping stone" can be underwritten by a $50 gift.

The new 55,000 square foot Communications Center will be located on a 6.6-acre site in the same business park three miles west of downtown Dallas where the newspaper has leased space for 11 years.

In recent years, the Reporter's services have expanded to include:

■ Ownership and operation of **Religious News Service**, the nation's only wire service devoted exclusively to religion coverage;

■ The **UMR Institute for Church Communications**, a source of training in the effective use of church media and in relating to the public media; and

■ **Mission Communications**, a non-profit ad agency that specializes in graphics, illustrative and interpretive materials for local churches and church agencies.

An innovation in the new Communications Center will be production facilities that will assist local churches and church agencies in the effective use of video.

The United Methodist Reporter, which dates to 1847, is the sixth-oldest publication in continuous operation in the United States. It publishes individualized editions for more than half of United Methodism's 72 annual conferences and for more than 300 local churches.

It also publishes a variety of newspapers for other denominations, including official national newspapers for both the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ.

Beyond its goal of securing the Communications Center funding, the UMR Foundation is pursuing the long-term goal of a $10 million endowment whose earnings will help defray the cost of subscriptions to the Reporter and its related communications ministries.

Contributions or requests for more information about the new UMR Communications Center may be secured by writing: Challenge, The United Methodist Reporter Foundation, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266.

Cook Foundation gift based on far-ranging philanthropy

Joe B. and Louise P. Cook, the benefactors of the Cook Foundation whose $60,000 gift to the UMR Communications Center was announced last week, were long-time members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church of Houston before their deaths, respectively, in 1990 and 1989.

The memorial gift was announced by their daughter, Mrs. Barbara Wendland, and her husband, Erroll, of Temple, Texas. It will be paid in three years beginning in 1991.

Mrs. Wendland has written several articles for the Reporter. Mr. Wendland is a member of the UMR Foundation Board of Trustees. They are members of First UMC of Temple.

Mr. and Mrs. Cook had a wide range of philanthropic interests in addition to their local church. They were particularly committed to providing scholarship assistance for deserving students. More than 85 students have received college educations as a result of their endowed scholarship support.

"My parents loved the church and the faith that it taught," Mrs. Wendland said. "I am sure they would be pleased to know that some of their resources are being used to help tell the church's story more effectively to future generations."

Native American camp stresses spiritual values

United Methodist News Service

SEATTLE—Finding a spiritual base for life can help Native Americans recover their self-esteem, strengthen their families and fight the social destruction of alcohol.

That was the message to participants in the recent United Methodist Native American Family Camp in Seattle.

"How can we bring the 'Indian way' back into our churches?" workshop leader Catherine Reiner, an Alaska Eskimo, asked during sessions on the campus of Seattle Pacific University.

Ms. Reiner said that traditional Native American dance "may be viewed as a form of prayer in which we say to God, 'Thank you for allowing me to move my hands and legs as an extension of my prayer to you.'"

She said, "Symbols have power and meaning. Sweet grass, the Bible, cedar, water, fire, the living things—all deepen the meaning of our lives and help us to express Christian values such as caring, loving and forgiving."

Some of the 175 participants and leaders from a dozen tribes across the United States expressed the view that traditional spirituality strengthens and complements Christian commitment. Others disagreed, saying that reconciling traditional culture and Christian belief is impossible.

Leaders also pointed out the church's historic role, like the federal government's, in systematic destruction of traditional culture, but said its present-day role can be positive and redemptive through providing a Christian framework for spirituality.

Jerry Bread, a Cherokee-Kiowa who is an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma, told workshop participants that Native Americans have compromised themselves to accommodate the larger culture, resulting in a growing loss of self-esteem.

He urged reclaiming the spiritual resources of Native Americans—family, appreciation of nature, and a tradition of storytelling.

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'Regular' upbringing prepares new UM executive to overcome barriers

Kathy Reeves
. . . share gifts, talents

United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—Barriers created by attitude are often more difficult to overcome than physical constraints.

As the new executive secretary for persons with handicapping conditions for the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the Rev. Kathy Reeves says she hopes to find opportunities for all people "to share the gifts and talents that they have."

In her job with the board's Health and Welfare Ministries unit, she also says she wants to dispel the myths that people with handicapping conditions are incapable of holding full-time jobs, cannot provide the same level of competency or require prohibitively expensive work settings.

On the other hand, she said, someone who is limited in one way is not necessarily overdeveloped in others.

"We need to just say we're regular folks," she said.

Ms. Reeves, 37, had a "regular" upbringing in the Chicago area, despite the fact that the oxygen flow in an incubator after her premature birth left her "very near-sighted." She can read print with glasses but cannot discern details in objects at a distance.

Her family's active religious faith also left her with an image of a God who accepts everyone and enhances life. The image stayed with her until she entered United Methodist-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., in 1976.

After serving as an associate pastor in two congregations, she arrived at Frances Willard Memorial United Methodist Church in Oak Park, Ill.

She said the congregation, with a tradition of white male pastors, wasn't sure it wanted a visually impaired black woman to lead the church.

She remained there seven years.

"We grew together to accept each other, to love each other," she added.

She says she now seeks that kind of acceptance for others with handicapping conditions, to help them claim their power and worth and to celebrate it.

"When you know you're judged even before you're given a chance—that's where the pain is," she said.

Ms. Reeves serves as co-chairperson of the denomination's recently formed Association of Physically Challenged Ministers.

Lutheran ad project offers 'straight talk' by youths to parents

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

"I thought I had it all," says the teen-ager.

He cites such areas of achievement in his life as athletics, with a scene of him playing football; friends, with a scene showing him on a date with a girl; and grades, with a scene showing him getting an A-plus on a paper.

Then the screen shows the youth's girl friend among the people attending his funeral.

It's not a spot warning against drugs or AIDS. Following the funeral scene, the screen goes black, followed by a message that says, "Don't let your child be one of those. Listen."

This award-winning public service announcement (PSA) wasn't produced for a religious group and wasn't done by a volunteer advertising agency. It's the creation of 17-year-old Chad Hutchison of Crescent, Iowa, and is one of five productions by young people that have received national recognition in a project sponsored by Lutheran Brotherhood in Minneapolis.

The "Straight to Parents" ad writing competition is part of a program called RespecTeen, which was started two years ago by the Lutheran fraternal benefit society to provide resources for use by schools, churches and community groups in such areas as teen stress management, chemical abuse prevention, human sexuality, effective parenting and youth development.

The ad project was specifically designed to "provide a unique, fun, interactive way for students to learn to look at a problem, develop a solution and persuade an audience to take action."

Information about the competition was sent to high school English teachers across the country in January, and some 3,000 entries were submitted by teen-agers in either print or video formats.

Chad Hutchison, who attends Faith Lutheran Church, a Missouri Synod congregation, originally included a scene in his video in which the youth put a gun to his head, but the sponsors felt it was too graphic. He said there have been two suicides at his high school in the three years since he has been there, but he chose the theme because he and his teacher "were trying to think of something that everyone knows something about."

Like the other-award winning entries, his video is designed to encourage parents to communicate with their teen-agers as a way of showing love and respect and possibly heading off problems.

Sixteen-year-old Michael Gilliam of Fort Worth, Texas, chose two hands on a black background as the focal points of his winning entry. One hand represents a youth, the other his father.

The father asks his son if he wants the car, and the father's hand places keys in the son's hand. When the son says that's not what he wants, a similar transaction is made with money. Finally, the father asks if the son wants his time and gets a positive response, and the two hands link.

The final message acknowledges that time is sometimes "hard to give," but is very important to a teen-ager.

"I give God the glory for it. I think he gave me the idea," said Michael Gilliam, who attends South Cliff Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation. He said many other entrants had been taking classes in art, theater or television, but he simply used his grandmother's camera to develop his entry.

Church-as-publisher gets into print

By ELIZABETH EISENSTADT
Religious News Service

ASHEVILLE, N.C.—Homelessness is a problem that has inspired churches to set up shelters and soup lines.

But an Episcopal parish in Asheville has taken a different tack. All Souls, a congregation that attracts artists and aspiring artists, recently made homelessness—and its opposite, home—themes of the first issue of a new literary journal.

The congregation has become the publisher of "The Angle Street Review," a collection of prose, poetry, photography and art.

In the inaugural issue, notions of home and homelessness were evoked by fiction and nonfiction, much of it written by members of the parish.

Editor Bill Buchanan hopes the journal will be published annually and will draw contributions from farther afield.

"We are using the arts to communicate what the church is all about," Mr. Buchanan said in an interview.

"Part of our idea is to model different sorts of ministry," to show that the church can use ways other than preaching sermons or sending missionaries to "reach out into the community."

The "Review" takes its name from the church's address (#1 Angle Street), and from a Christian interpretation of the symbol of the angle.

"The angle represents the conjunction of the celestial and the terrestrial, that is, the location where God encounters the world," said All Souls rector Neil Zabriskie.

All Souls, whose congregation numbers close to 500 members, has a liturgy, pipe organ and choir which attract a number of artists, both established and aspiring, according to Mr. Buchanan, a librarian at the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

Review

What's it like to start your life over?

By GARY RAY O'GUINN
Religious News Service

To thine own self be true, Shakespeare's genius pedant tells his son.

Good advice. Then again, just who are we?

There is a small question about the self and being true to it tugging at the lead character in "Regarding Henry," the new Mike Nichols film: Can someone be true to himself if he doesn't know who he is?

Hollywood's way of answering that question is to shoot someone in the brain—a dramatic excuse for moral lobotomy—and make the guy that wakes up a stranger to the guy who went to sleep.

The movie turns on an old but usable artificial premise. Suppose you are miserable and don't know it. What if you are given a second chance to fix it? What would you do?

"Regarding Henry" is an upwardly mobile Manhattan fairy tale for adults about friendship, family love and second chances.

There are no ghosts or angels pulling the plot strings. That propelling function is taken over by the tragedy befalling title character Henry Turner, who gets shot in the head during a robbery and loses his memory, among other things.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

"Regarding Henry" starring Harrison Ford is an upwardly mobile Manhattan fairy tale for adults about friendship, family love and second chances (see accompanying review).

This is not such a bad thing because he was not such a good guy—nasty to cripples and kids, including his own. Henry is a hard-ball lawyer who likes to win and will withhold evidence to do it.

In the rehab hospital, Henry is mentored back to humanity by Bradley, his unorthodox but effective physical therapist who gets Henry walking and talking.

You can't let anyone tell you who you are, he advises Henry. Which raises that question: Who is Henry? Or who was Henry? That's Henry's dilemma, answering both questions.

With his bumbling, goofy original child's mind, Henry reborn gets to go through his old life like a supermarket, keeping things he likes, like Mallomar cookies and his family, and tossing what he doesn't—like eggs and lawyering.

Meanwhile the family fortune goes downwardly mobile, as his wife and daughter continue Henry's re-education.

The refinding of intimacy between wife and husband and respect between father and daughter, who teaches him how to tie shoelaces and read, is touching and funny. Best thing in the movie.

"Regarding Henry" brings Nichols and Harrison Ford back together again after their 1988 smash, "Working Girl." Ford's Indiana Jones boyish charm makes for a very engaging Henry, an innocent abroad who answers pay phones that ring as he walks by on the street.

There's an honored tradition in faith folkways about life having to slap you silly sometimes with tragedy to get your attention, and the movie is true to the touch here. You will leave the theater edifyingly content if not enlightened.

Observer downplays televangelists' effects

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

Televangelists aren't very successful at the work of evangelism, but they have helped to create an atmosphere in local churches that is long on entertainment and short on doctrinal teaching, according to a long-time observer of the electronic preachers.

Quentin J. Schultze, who teaches communications arts and science at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., has been frequently cited by the general media in discussions about televangelists, particularly during the scandals involving Jim and Tammy Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart in the late 1980s.

He is the author of several books on the subject, and his latest, "Televangelism and American Culture," published by Baker Book House, examines the impact the popular preachers have had on evangelism and local churches.

Effectiveness not proven

"In spite of what televangelists say, and what evangelicals often wish to believe, television has never proven itself to be an effective evangelistic medium," Dr. Schultze writes.

Although surveys have indicated that most people who watch such programs are already Christians, he says, "this reality typically falls on deaf ears in the United States, where it is assumed that the number of people reached by a medium determines its power."

According to Dr. Schultze, the televangelists "have learned how to reach likely supporters, not how to reach enormous audiences with the gospel. Sunday morning is the most sought-after program period not because it is effective for reaching non-believers, but exactly because it is one of the best times for getting at the checkbooks and credit cards of believers."

Over the years, Dr. Schultze says, "I have learned that televangelists and their avid supporters nearly always object to data that show TV evangelism to be largely unsuccessful. They like to point to anecdotal evidence that is impossible to refute, since some people are indeed saved through these broadcasts. But the numbers remain small in proportion to the enormous expense of national television programming. Not one major study has found statistical support for the power of televangelism."

What televangelism has done effectively is to transform styles of worship in local churches, Dr. Schultze says.

"For the sake of maintaining or building congregations, local pastors and churches have imitated the styles of entertainment popular with the generation nurtured on TV," he says.

Among other things, this has led to a situation in which "the local church has found it increasingly difficult to get its members involved in church activities and programs," Dr. Schultze says.

Work for place in pews

"Like television viewers, many church members do not expect to have to work for a place in the pews. Church membership has tended to mean little more than joining the Sunday audience."

Dr. Schultze's book also contains familiar criticisms of televangelists based on their creation of uncritical personality cults, substitution of a "prosperity gospel" for the authentic message of the Bible, and emphasizing fund raising and modern technology. In the last chapter, he challenges religious broadcasters, church members and both the secular and religious press to work to improve the current situation.

Televangelists should be sponsored by either a large church, a denomination, or a board of directors composed primarily of people greatly respected in public life, Dr. Schultze says.

While acknowledging codes of ethics established by such self-regulatory groups as National Religious Broadcasters and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, he comments that such groups "want to attract as many members as possible, so they generally establish weak ethical codes that create only the appearance of genuine self-regulation."

Some maintain church ties

On the positive side, Dr. Schultze notes, "televangelists such as Charles Stanley, D. James Kennedy and Lloyd Ogilvie have willingly and effectively placed themselves under the authority of a local congregation. Moreover, in each case the local congregation is also part of a denomination that seriously oversees the activities of its churches.

History of Hymns

Family fellowship led facile poet to write

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,
And it told thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to thee.
Draw me nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, blessed Lord,
To thy precious, bleeding side.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Writing poems on the spur of the moment was a common experience for Fanny J. Crosby. A chance remark would quickly provide the inspiration for her poetic expression.

In 1874 she left New York for a speaking tour that took her as far west as Cincinnati. During her brief visit there she spoke to crowds of people in churches and missions.

In Cincinnati she was a guest in the home of William Howard Doane, an amateur composer and a wealthy manufacturer of woodworking machinery.

Crosby and Doane had met six years earlier and had begun collaborating in writing hymns. As part of her fellowship with the Doane family, one evening Doane talked about the nearness of God in their lives.

When Fanny went to her room, her mind was flooded with ideas from their conversation. Before she went to sleep, the lines of "I Am Thine, O Lord" were in her mind.

The next morning she recited the poem to Doane, who wrote it down and composed the music.

The words are based on Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

In 1875 Doane published a Sunday school songbook in which he included this hymn along with three others he had written with Fanny Crosby—"All the Way My Savior Leads Me," "Savior, More than Life to Me," and "To God Be the Glory."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Day Is Dying in the West"

Looking Heavenward

I'd like my later years to be
bright . . . flaming . . .
like this autumn tree
holding vibrant leaves
however few
right into
the eternal spring
of Heaven.
—POLLYANNA SEDZIOL

Dear Deborah

Competition compounds computer crunch

Dear Deborah:

I am 14 and need to use our family computer to do my homework most nights.

The teachers know I have one, so they give me assignments to do on it. However, I have an older and a younger brother and they tie it up until bedtime and then I have to argue with Mom to stay up and do my homework.

I think this is not fair and I am really tired when I get up in the morning.

What is a fair way for all of us to get our homework done before bedtime?

Tina

Dear Tina:

You are fortunate to have a computer, and sharing it is much like being in an office where people have to share terminals or printers, etc.

I think you, your parents and your brothers need to develop some "office rules" for the use of the computer. Then if there really is not enough time for all the homework, take turns staying up late.

Of course your parents could also talk with the teachers and perhaps arrange computer homework to be reduced to only one or two nights a week.

Good luck to you all!

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace — Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
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Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Get Involved

This week's column is written by the Reverend Dr. Larry D. Robertson, Chair, Conference Board of Church and Society for the Louisiana Area. Dr. Robertson is also pastor of First United Methodist Church in Ponchatoula.

Dear Friends,

"You never know what's brewing in someone else's pot." People have burdens to carry that may be invisible to everyone else. We think we know the people in our church; then one day we read in the paper — some breakdown in their family ties — an arrest — an attempted suicide — or worse. People are hurting.

So we are tempted to just keep things going as smoothly as we can in our churches. We don't want to rock the boat. We don't need controversy.

Yet, some issues can't be swept under the rug. At Annual Conference our Board of Church and Society had to bring some issues out to be dealt with. I was pleased with the manner in which the Conference faced these issues and acted upon them.

One of the most pressing is the very future of the village of Dulac, the Indian (Native American) community and our ministry there — all of which are threatened by a proposal to build a hurricane protection levee ¼ mile **above** Dulac. This would protect the City of Houma; but, as we have done for 200 + years, it puts the Indians in jeopardy. If they are left "outside the gate," so to speak, eventually storms and flooding will destroy their village, their culture, their heritage. Our United Methodist ministry has been there, especially through the Women's Division, since the 1930's. What can we do to preserve Dulac? Our conference passed a resolution opposing the location of the floodgate.

In support of that conference action you can write to:

Col. Richard V. Gorski
US Corp of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, La. 70160-0267
and
South Terrebonne Tidewater Levee District
P.O. Box 370
Chauvin, La. 70344

Like you, I hate to get involved — "I've got more than I can say Grace over already" — but as Christians we do care about people being invaded . . . pushed around . . . oppressed — whether it's in Kuwait, the Persian Gulf or our own Gulf Coast.

Your prayers and letters will do some good!

God Bless . . .

Yours in Christ,
Larry D. Robertson

* * *

QUOTE FROM RESOLUTION PASSED
AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church calls upon the South Terrebonne Tidewater Conservation Management District, the Army Corps of Engineers and the appropriate state agencies to halt all actions for the proposed construction and to revoke the permit for the construction of the floodgate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Louisiana Annual Conference calls upon the Corps of Engineers and the appropriate state agencies to hold public hearings to explore the environmental and economic impact of the proposed floodgate and levee protection and to consider the impact of this project upon the Houma Native American community.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of the Resolution be sent to
South Terrebonne Tidewater Conservation Management District,
The Army Corps of Engineers,
Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government,
Governor Buddy Roemer,
Senator J. Bennett Johnston,
Senator John Breaux, and
the State Legislative committee for Natural Resources."

Ministerial Fellows Program at Centenary Challenging, Rewarding

The Ministerial Fellows Program at Centenary College recently provided Rev. Lewis "Jake" Olmsted two weeks of study and reflection away from his normal pastoral duties. Rev. Olmsted pastors the Leesville-Holly Grove charge. As a twenty year veteran of the Air Force he understands the community which includes nearby Ft. Polk.

"We have had several members of our congregation in the Persian Gulf," Jake said during an interview at Centenary College. "I've been away from home myself, and I know what it's like. My wife knows, too. We have empathy . . . we understand."

More in-depth understanding is what brought Jake to campus for his two one-week study retreats in Centenary's Ministerial Fellows Program. Fellows selected for the Program are invited to campus as the guests of the college with room, board and access to faculty and library provided.

"My topic of study was The Lord's Supper, Eucharist, Holy Communion. I looked at the words of Jesus, along with customs and traditions of the time. I want to have an understanding of what those words mean for today, and we need to have an understanding of the background to do that," he said.

Rev. Dale Hensarling, Director of Centenary's School of Church Careers, served as Jake's coordinator. He also worked closely with Dick Anders, Director of Church Relations, Ella Edwards, acting librarian, and Carolyn Garison, archivist. "I'm really impressed with our library," Olmsted commented. "Actually, I'm really impressed with all the assistance and facilities. There is a very warm atmosphere on campus."

The Rev. Lewis "Jake" Olmsted

The two one-week study sessions were admittedly a challenge to Jake. "I have no problem with preparing sermons," he confided, "but reading and research take time. I tend to postpone that. This was a little push. This was a challenge, and it has been so rewarding. It has really enriched my life and my understanding of communion."

A copy of Jake's paper was presented to the Centenary Archives after he was recognized at Annual Conference as having met all requirements of the Ministerial Fellows Program.

"I cannot praise the program enough," he said. "I absolutely would recommend this to all my fellow pastors."

For more information on the Ministerial Fellows Program, please call Dick Anders, Director of Church Relations, 318/869-5108.

Shreveport Layman Leads AAMW

Mr. George Rankin Schurman, member of Lakeview United Methodist Church in Shreveport was elected charter president of the national ecumenical association, the American Association for Ministry in the Workplace (AAMW).

The general purpose of the AAMW is to "address human needs in the workplace by facilitating ministry among persons and representing the resources of the faith communities." It ministers in a variety of ways through referral networks, consultations, promotions, research and resource people.

The AAMW has its roots in the Task Force on Industrial Chaplaincy created by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church. Mr. Schuman, who is president of Schurman Oil and Gas Exploration, served on the Division board of directors during the 1984-88 quadrennium, chaired its task force and has represented the Division as chairman of the AAMW coordinating council since 1987.

Mr. George R. Schurman

For further information about this organization contact Mr. George R. Schurman, P.O. Box 2056, Shreveport, LA 71166.

Louisiana Churchpeople Attending World Methodist Assembly in Singapore

Twenty-six Louisiana United Methodists are among the 3500 people attending the Sixteenth World Methodist Assembly in Singapore from July 24-31. The sixteen delegates in the Louisiana group will study a variety of issues including the environment, persons in a variety of oppressive circumstances, evangelism and the message of God for today's world in small group sessions known in Asia as **pondocs**.

The overall theme of the gathering, "Jesus Christ — God's Living World," will be examined by notable church figures from Africa, Korea, India, Great Britain, Germany and the United States.

The World Methodist Council (WMC), is the sponsor of the Assembly which meets every five years in various areas of the world where its 64 church-constituent bodies reside. The organization represents a community of more than 54 million Methodists. This will be the first Assembly in Asia in the World Methodist Conference's 100-year history.

Dr. Nancy Carruth, a member of the WMC's Executive Committee, "welcomes the chance to share [our] commonality . . . and celebrate the things we can all do together." She attended the last gathering in Nairobi, Kenya, and remembers the great feeling of fellowship — "that participants experienced."

Dr. James Caraway, another second-time delegate, looks forward to being with other Wesleyan followers of Christ from all over the world. Since it is not dominated by America, he says, one leaves with "a new perspective of the Wesleyan Movement."

Despite the cultural differences, however, veteran delegate, Dr. George Calvin sees similar "forms and substance" in the world communion of Methodism. He especially enjoys the "connectionalism, despite the language differences."

Mr. Leroy Crump, a first-time lay delegate says, that he and his wife, Dr. Anita Crump, are ecstatic about traveling to Singapore and attending this historic . . . Conference. He looks forward to "receiving valuable and significant information . . . [to] further deepen understanding and appreciation of Methodism." Dr. Crump adds that she is also eager to "see if there is reality in our oneness."

Other delegates are: Dr. Alfred Norris, Bishop William B. Oden, Dr. John Charles Cooksey, the Rev. Donald R. Avery, Dr. Stone W. Caraway, Mrs. Iva Lena W. French, Mr. Mat Kawasaki, Dr. Sarah S. Kreutziger, the Rev. Leslie P. Norris, Dr. Charles B. Simmons, Dr. Donald A. Webb, Mr. Paul White, and Dr. Harvey G. Williamson.

Approved visitors are: Dr. Judy Black Avery, Mrs. Carol Z. Caraway, Mrs. Eleanor D. Caraway, Dr. Anita Hoover Crump, Mr. Lerious J. French, Mrs. Sato S. Kawasaki, Mrs. Mackie H. Norris, Mrs. Marilyn Oden, Mrs. Peggy Williamson, and Dr. Keith L. Kreutziger.

Around the Conference

Pictured are some of the staff and children who recently participated in the Vacation Bible School held June 10-14, 1991, at Trinity UMC in Alexandria. The commencement sharing program was held on Sunday evening, June 16. A cake and ice cream social followed to honor the students and families and to welcome back pastor Thomas Beeler and his wife Julia for another Conference year.

Pollock UMC has recently completed expansion and remodeling of its educational unit which is the realization of an eight-year dream. Members will be making more improvements in the near future. Sunday, June 30, 1991, the church held a Consecration Worship Service to offer these new changes for the enrichment and challenge of life in Christ. Alexandria District Superintendent, the Rev. C. Richard Hoffpauir, led the congregation during the worship service. Chairman of the church's building committee is Mr. Ray Babcock. The Rev. Sherman L. Beird is pastor.

Forum '92 Slated for Albuquerque

Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the site for **Forum '92**, a national conference for adults who work with youth. Scheduled January 15-19, 1992, the event is sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship.

Designed for pastors, youth staff, counselors, Sunday school teachers, scouters and all other adults who work with youth, Forum '92 has as its theme, "Dwelling in the Spirit: Drummers, Dancers, and Storytellers."

Guest speakers include Joycelyn Elders, M.D., the director of the Department of Health for the State of Arkansas, who will present "Loving Adolescents Into Life"; Duane A. Ewers, editor of Church School Publications and Associate General Secretary for the General Board of Discipleship who will address "Adolescent Faith and Christian Education"; and Bishop Forrest Stith, resident bishop of the New York West Area, who will discuss "Faith Undergirding for Adult Leaders with Youth."

John Holbert, professor of the Perkins School of Theology, will lead daily Bible study. The opening worship service will be led by the Rev. Minerva Carcano, district superintendent of the Western District, Rio Grande Conference.

More than fifty workshops will be offered.

Objectives of Forum '92, according to the design team that planned the event, are:

* to remember and celebrate the creative power of Jesus Christ;
* to enhance spiritual growth and renewal;
* to experience connection with others;
* to develop skills and strategies for transforming youth ministries.

Forum '92 activities will take place at the Ramada Hotel Classic in Albuquerque and at St. John's United Methodist Church. The registration fee for Forum '92 is $150, which includes a special evening at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. Housing, meals and transportation are not included. Limited scholarships are available for persons from small-membership congregations.

Brochures are available now, and registration forms will be available in August.

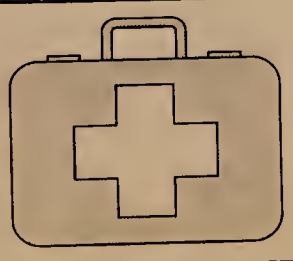
For brochures or additional information, contact the Rev. Tom Salsgiver, Section on Christian Education and Age-Level Ministries, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202; telephone: 615-340-7143.

Church Growth Workshop to be Held at Broadmoor UMC, Shreveport

When the Reverend Bill Easum went to San Antonio's Colonial Hills United Methodist Church in 1969, he and his congregation began turning a declining, debt-ridden church into a vital, growing worship center. The church is now a thriving, growing congregation with 1,822 members reported in 1988, and with many varied avenues for ministry by the members. The principles developed in this endeavor are outlined in a two-day continuing education seminar entitled, "Church Growth With Integrity."

The "Church Growth With Integrity" workshop, offered by the Perkins School of Theology, and led by Rev. Easum, will be held at Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 24-25, 1991.

For more information or to register, please write or call Church Growth Seminar, Office of Continuing Education, Perkins School of Theology, SMU, Dallas, TX 75275-0133; 214-692-2251.



On the inside . . .

A proposal for denominationwide health insurance for United Methodist clergy is unveiled. See story and chart on Page 3.

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The Time is Now

This week's column is written by Ms. Lori Bridges, President, Conference Council on Youth Ministries. Ms. Bridges was recently elected as President of Jurisdictional Youth Ministries. She is a member of Nolley Memorial United Methodist Church in Jena.

TIME. What a simple word with so many powerful meanings. Have you ever stopped and realized how precious time is? Time is a gift from God. As Christians we are taught to use our time wisely and live life to the fullest one day at a time.

In Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, God shows us how very precious time is and how quickly it passes:

> . . . For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

We are constantly reminded that there is a time for everything and everyone. In our daily lives we need to strive to value our time more. We need to realize all the big and little things that are happening in our churches and communities. Now is the time to notice the changes and encourage the youth of your church to become more involved and aware of how fast time passes. The youtb in your church today need your encouragement and support, for they will be the church leaders of tomorrow. Now is the time for each of us to do all we can to encourage the growth and further development of our church. Let us always remember our precious gift from God . . . Time.

In closing, I want to share something with you that I learned at Noah's Ark . . .

> "JESUS. He came singing love. He died singing love. But He arose in silence. If the song is to continue, We must do the singing."

The Time Is Now!

Lori Bridges, President

Eighteenth Annual Meeting Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women

September 20 - 21, 1991
Theme: "One Plus. . ."

The Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women will convene at 1 p.m. on Friday, September 20, 1991, in the Family Life Center of Henning Memorial United Methodist Church in Sulphur.

Conference President, Mrs. Norma Winegeart will preside over the meeting. The Reverend Fred Wideman, pastor of the host church; Mrs. Joyce Hazel, President of tbe Lake Charles District United Methodist Women; and Mrs. Pat Davis, President of the local United Methodist Women's group at Henning will welcome participants.

The theme for the upcoming event: "One Plus . . . " celebrates the fact that there are now more than one million members in United Methodist Women. One million plus members is an exciting milestone. The theme, however, is a reminder that each one of those million members is the most important key and the strength to fulfill the mission of the entire United Methodist Women.

Mrs. Thelma Johnson, Vice President of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, is the featured speaker for the Annual Meeting. Mrs. Johnson will give the keynote address on Friday evening. She is also scheduled during the session to give a summary of the relationship between local units and the national office.

In addition to her position with the Women's Division, Mrs. Johnson is assigned as a member of the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and serves as a member of the Executive Committee of the North American Area of the World Federation of Methodist Women, and as a member of the Common Council of Church Women United. Mrs. Johnson took early retirement following thirty-five years of employment in order to devote more time to volunteer work in the church, especially with the UMW.

The worship leaders for the Annual Meeting are the Reverends Carol Susan Winn, Tracy MacKenzie and Carole Cotton-Winn. All are active members of the UMW.

The Reverend Carol Susan Winn will lead the opening worship on Friday afternoon. She is presently serving the Evangeline United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge. The Saturday morning worship leader will be the Reverend Tracy MacKenzie, pastor of the Church Point-Maxie-Ville Platte Charge located in the Lake Charles District. The Reverend Carole Cotton-Winn, Lake Charles District Superintendent, along with her husband, the Reverend John Winn, will serve together as communion celebrants for the closing service.

Mrs. Peggy Pugh and Mrs. Donna Bergstedt are co-chairpersons of the Annual Meeting Task Force; Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Iris Vinson are working as co-chairpersons of Local Arrangements Committee.

For further information regarding the event contact Mrs. Bergstedt, 1309 9th Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601; 318-436-7637. Send registrations to Mrs. Sybil Moore, 313 Mathilda Drive, Sulphur, LA 70663. Deadline for meeting registrations is September 10, 1991, and housing reservations August 31, 1991.

World Communion Sunday

Christians Share Their Faith and Love

On World Communion Sunday, October 6, 1991, Christians around the world will share their faith and love with one another.

On World Communion Sunday, United Methodists, as well as other Christians, celebrate the worldwide Christian faith. United Methodists join Christians of many cultures and denominations as they gather around the Lord's table to witness our oneness in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Through the special offering, taken as a part of the World Communion observance, ethnic members of our global denomination obtain higher education and training so they may share their faith in various fields of endeavor. This offering funds three programs that help United Methodists prepare for the ministry and other careers.

Crusade Scholarships support U.S. and international graduate students committed to serving the needs of their churches and communities. The scholarships are funded by 50 percent of the offering, through tbe General Board of Global Ministries.

Ethnic Scholarships aid undergraduates recommended by their congregations. They are funded by 35 percent of the offering, through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Ethnic In-Service Training Grants, which receive 15 percent of the offering, through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, help racial-ethnic United Methodists become certified in church-related professions by combining seminary studies with practical training.

By supporting these scholarship programs, opportunities for ministry among people of color in our denomination are expanded. Our gifts on World Communion Sunday unite Christians throughout the world, giving and receiving in remembrance of Christ and in community with one another.

August Conference Calendar

District Mini-Schools of Christian Mission
2 Full Seminary Transcript of 1st year P.A.Y. Candidates due with Registrar
2-3 South Central Jurisdiction United Methodist Men's Leadership Training Program, Dallas, TX
2-5 National Youth Ministry Organization Legislative Assembly, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
5-9 "Youtb '91" for Senior High Youth, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
12 Shreveport District YSF Straight Forward Tour
13 Monroe District YSF Straight Forward Tour
14 Alexandria District YSF Straight Forward Tour
14-18 "Aldersgate '91" General Board of Discipleship, Chattanooga, TN
15 Acadiana District YSF Straight Forward Tour
15-18 Cursillo No. 24, Tall Timbers
16 Baton Rouge District YSF Straight Forward Tour
17 New Orleans District YSF Straight Forward Tour
18 Lake Charles District YSF Straight Forward Tour
18-25 United Methodist Women National Seminar, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
19 Conference Education Committee, First Church, Alexandria, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
18-25 United Methodist Women National Seminar, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
24 Workers With Youth Seminar, First Church, Alexandria
25 Christian Education Sunday
26-30 New District Superintendent and Council Directors' Training, Lake Junaluska, NC
27-28 Second Annual Mount Sequoyah Golf Tournament

In Memoriam

The Reverend J. W. Williams, retired minister, died July 11, 1991. Mr. Williams, who is survived by his wife Thelma, was 66 at the time of his death.

THE DAWNING MILLENNIUM FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

On the inside . . .

Methodists all over the world are being called to a Dawning Millennium. See World Methodist Council coverage on Page 3.

Persons — Churches — Events

On Tuesday, August 6, 1991, at 7:30 p.m. **Genesis UMC in Baton Rouge** will host a Nagasaki-Hiroshima Memorial Service. The theme for the special event is "Blessed Are They Who Mourn," and will include an ecumenical worship service featuring the Alleluia Dance Ensemble and the Heritage Choir. The public is invited and other Louisiana United Methodists from the area are encouraged to attend and support this new congregation. The service is sponsored by the Bienville House for Peace and Justice. The Reverend Mary Sloan Baugh is pastor of Genesis.

* * *

The Administration of **Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital in New Orleans** is proud to be our only Full Service Hospital within the Louisiana Annual Conference. To affirm its commitment to the connectional system, Conference clergy, deacons and directors of Christian Education are invited to spend a special day at the bospital on Aug. 21, 1991. The day will include breakfast and lunch, a health screening, discussion of trends in Health Care, and opportunities to dialogue. Point three CEU's will be given for this event wbich is free to participants.

* * *

An **Adult Workers With Youth Seminar** will take place August 24, 1991, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at First UMC in Alexandria. Topics for the event include Music, Music, Music and Encyclopedia of Youth Work. Music, Music, Music for Youth Choirs will be led by Mrs. Esther Socolofsky, Cboral Director of University UMC in Baton Rouge. The Reverend Tom Salsgiver, Director of Education and Ministries for Senior High Youth, General Board of Discipleship, will lead the Encyclopedia of Youth Work. An extraordinary display of Youth Resources will be available. Adult Workers With Youth Seminar is sponsored by the Conference Council on Youth Ministries and tbe Board of Discipleship.

* * *

Ms. Joni Noble, Mr. Andrew Hawthorne and Ms. Kristina Farmer captured top honors in the 26th Annual Arts Quest sponsored by **Northeast Campus Ministry at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe.**

Mr. Hawthorne is a graduate of Twin City Christian Academy in West Monroe and holds a B.F.A. from Louisiana Tech. His "Best of Show" entry was a photograph of himself entitled "Man as Spirit," produced by using a long shutter speed and movement designed to convey emotion.

Ms. Noble and Ms. Farmer were purchase prize winners in the student division. A member of the First United Methodist Church in Bastrop, Ms. Noble is a senior who will receive a B.F.A. with an emphasis in painting. Her photograph, entitled "Jack," was produced using gum bichromate and enhanced with colored pencils. Ms. Farmer is a junior at NLU. She is a graduate of North Caddo High School and a member of St. Clement's Catholic Church in Vivian. Her entry, "Self-Portrait," is tbe first portrait she has ever done.

All three received one-person shows at the Wesley Gallery. Noble and Farmer's purchased works will hang among the permanent collection at Northeast Campus Ministry. The Rev. Jim Wilson is the pastor.

'Stewardship of the Earth Day' October 13

The Stewardship of the Environment Commission of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference requests all churches in Louisiana to observe the first "Stewardship of the Earth Day" on Sunday, October 13, 1991.

The theme, "In My Back Yard," together with the scripture "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," Psalm 24:1, is suggested as the basis for the worship service as well as education classes for all age levels.

Art copy has been prepared for use in promotion of Stewardship of the Earth Day events in newsletters, church bulletins and other communications.

For further information contact Mrs. Audrey Milo of Mallalieu-St. James United Methodist Churches, 513 East Main Street, Lafayette, LA 70501.

Africa University Library to Benefit from Sale of Commemorative Items

An ultra-thin Bible, a special edition of **The United Methodist Hymnal** and an African-motif Christmas card set are among items offered beginning in August by The United Methodist Publishing House to benefit Africa University.

The publishing house will donate a portion of sales income from the items, which will be available through Cokesbury stores and mail order outlets beginning in August.

This is the second year that the University will benefit from the organization.

The effort continues last year's $1 million fund-raising effort to equip the library of the denominationally related university's College of Theology, set to open in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, in March 1992.

New commemorative items include two Cokesbury editions of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Of the $8.95 price of a hard-cover Bible, $1 will go to the library, and of the $29.95 price of an ultra-thin, bonded leather Bible, $3.50 will be contributed.

Also new this year is an 18-card boxed commemorative set of full-color Christmas cards, depicting an African drummer boy and the Christ child. The publishing house will donate $1.25 per set sold at $9.95, or 75 cents per set when sold at $7.25 in quantities of 10 or more sets.

Five other Christmas card sets are available, each with 12 cards in four related designs. The library will receive 50 cents for each set sold at $2.95, or 25 cents for each set sold at $2 for 10 or more sets.

Local churches and church groups may purchase the card sets in quantity at the reduced rate, for resale at the regular price for a single set.

A commemorative hard-cover edition of **The United Methodist Hymnal**, with the Africa University emblem embossed in gold on a navy-blue cover, is again available. The Africa University will receive $1.50 for each $11.95 hymnal purchased.

In addition to this fund-raising effort to equip the library, the publishing house is also assembling a library of donated theological books and other resources.

Because of processing and shipping costs, individuals and publishers have been asked to submit lists — not books — for consideration to Rosalyn Lewis, publishing house librarian and chairwoman of the library development committee. Her mailing address is P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202.

A core list of nearly 7,500 titles needed for the theology collection is available from United Methodist annual conference offices, and from the committee. Other titles will also be considered.

The university, first for the denomination on the continent of Africa, will open with a small student body in colleges of theology and agriculture. Tbe first buildings are projected for completion in 1993.

Ground-breaking ceremonies April 6 were attended by more than 3,000 people, including Zimbabwean government officials, United Methodist bishops, denominational representatives, members of the board of directors and the region's Shona chief.

Editorial

Is God in your vacation?

As countless pastors can testify, summer vacation for many people includes "vacation" from worship.

It's noteworthy, therefore, that a recent "New York Times" article points out that thousands of Americans this summer have combined their vacations with stays in spiritual retreat settings, including monasteries and religious retreat houses.

Travel experts, according to the "Times," say there has been a "dramatic" increase in requests for rooms in such settings. Monasteries now have a higher occupancy rate than hotels, the article states.

We believe such news is as instructive as it is intriguing. The lessons include both theological and practical dimensions.

On a theological level, the surge of interest in religious "getaways" is a needed reminder that re-charging one's spiritual batteries is at least as vital as taking a vacation for physical and emotional renewal.

Indeed, overlooking the need to refresh one's relationship with God while reveling in vacation amusement is a probable source of a common complaint: returning home from the beach or the mountains with the troubling feeling that "we didn't really have a vacation."

By contrast, our Lord's practice of taking extended time off to commune with God is a valid starting point for a Christian "theology of vacation."

Namely, leisure—release from life's routine demands and responsibilities—is a gift from God to rejuvenate our relationship with the One from whom all blessings flow.

On a practical level, the limited number of monastery and retreat house rooms in the United States—a mere 2,000, according to the "Times"—severely restricts the numbers of us who can take monastic-type vacations. Nor would such experiences suit everyone's needs or be everyone's "cup of tea."

In planning a vacation, however, we can and should be intentional about including specific ways to spend time with God. For example, while making hotel or campsite reservations, pencil in plans to attend services at a nearby local church or at a park-sponsored worship event.

Information about the latter can be obtained by contacting one's state office of parks and recreation or, for federal facilities, the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Further, we should be mindful of those who visit our congregations while on vacation. We should make special efforts to make them feel welcome in our midst and be alert to special needs they may have.

Finally, we should regularly remind ourselves and others that life's most satisfying leisure results from heeding Jesus' call to "come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

Letters to the Editor

Christ left us a church, not a denomination

Regarding the July 12 "Here I Stand" headlined, "Are denominations obsolete?":

Denominations are an ego trip started by Martin Luther. His was not a Reformation but a Deformation.

Church energies and dwindling funds are devoted as much to perpetuating religiously-oriented organizations as much as to saving souls.

Christ's message is, simply, "the Kingdom of God is at hand."

It is NOT "the Kingdom of God is at hand. See your favorite Church-of-the-Month bureaucracy for directions and sing-alongs, bingo, field trips and our church has more games and dinners than yours, and we have a better preacher, etc."

Christ left us with a church, not denominations—a rock, not pebble beach.

Ed Mesko
Potomac, Maryland

Exactly what we need

I found the article headlined, "Share-the-cost evangelism plan takes off" which appeared in the July 12 issue interesting.

This is exactly what we have needed for years to excite churches about evangelism. This is the only way to solve world problems and draw us closer to God.

I hope this pilot project on evangelism will move quickly.

Lorraine Godar
Westmont, Illinois

Columns compared

I read with interest the July 19 "Here I Stand" column by Eleanor Finkbeiner regarding biblical illiteracy.

Then I read the "Faithfully yours" column in the same issue by Managing Editor John A. Lovelace headlined, "I can hear it now: Show the truth, the whole truth."

Ms. Finkbeiner makes a strong case for why we have a high rate of biblical illiteracy.

Mr. Lovelace then proves her point. He quotes John 8:32: "You shall know the truth . . ." Then Mr. Lovelace states: "You may recall that the Gospel writer left unstated exactly how we shall know the truth."

My comment: Getting down to basics, why else did Jesus come into the world? Answer: His father sent him to bear witness to the truth.

I am appalled that an editor of a United Methodist publication intended to educate and inform does not know for what it was that the Father sent his Son to bear witness.

Leslie E. Delahay
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Aw, come on!

Regarding the July 19 "Faithfully yours" by John A. Lovelace headlined, "I can hear it now: Show the truth, the whole truth":

Aw, come on, John—give us a break! It's not bad enough that you give us a bad paraphrase of John 8:32 and an even worse exegesis.

You then go on to violate the very point that you sought to make. It is precisely the whole truth that is missing from the now famous footage of the Fort Worth police incident.

The whole truth would need several seconds of footage from within the patrol car so that we could know whether or not the word "alleged" properly applies to the words "the attempted escape from a police car."

The whole truth would need reverse angles to clear up misperceptions due to the depth of field and shooting angles.

And the whole truth would need the sound track beginning with the first alleged attempts to kick out the window of the patrol car and the officer's early response to that.

I do agree, however, that "to the extent that video cameras and videotape can, indeed, help us both to know the truth and share the truth, we should welcome them and use them as we seek to serve the One whom we know as the truth."

Roy Bassett
Arlington, Texas

Do changes work?

About this time each year many church newsletters announce a change in worship schedule.

I have never heard of a temporary change of schedule resulting in anything other than decreased attendance. It would be interesting to hear of different results anywhere. Perhaps churches that have not learned by their own experience could be saved unfortunate declines in attendance if publicity were given failures of other congregations.

Charles Walton
Dripping Springs, Texas

FaithLine

A United Methodist bishop recently stated his belief that applause during worship services is inappropriate. "It turns the church into a theater," Bishop William Boyd Grove told members of the West Virginia Annual Conference.

Do you agree? Why or why not?

Tell us what you think by recording a 45-second (maximum) message on the Reporter FaithLine answering machine.

Call (214) 630-6499 by midnight, Aug. 7. Or fax brief responses by the same date to (214) 630-0079.

My Witness

Wise words for youth

By CHARLES L. ALLEN

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Dr. Charles L. Allen is a retired ministerial member of the Texas Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Here are some words of advice for young people:

You have been living in a world which has been provided for you. Your turn for leadership is coming soon. We need your talents and your vision.

* * *

Leadership means to not be boxed in by the perceptions of other people. It means to possess both curiosity and courage. Do not lose your freedom to try.

* * *

You are fortunate to be young at this time. Today we are moving toward a friendlier, more peaceful world. You will increasingly see a world more whole and free.

* * *

Young people today are overcoming social barriers, such as background, color of skin, accent or gender. More and more, young people are at the same starting line.

* * *

You must have goals in life and develop a stubbornness which is required in the pursuit of those goals.

* * *

To get the most out of life, we must learn to communicate with other people and then do it.

* * *

Even though you are skilled and well educated, do not forget that it is possible for you to lose self-control, love for other people and your hope for the future.

* * *

You are going to have some failures and disappointments. When they come, do not quit. Get tougher and go on. Learn to tolerate uncertainty in life.

* * *

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life . . ." (John 14:6).

What others are saying

"We witness by what we say and do, and most of all by what we are. Our task is to help others see Jesus."

—The Rev. Kenneth Greet, Great Britain, guest preacher at Central Illinois Annual Conference session.

* * *

"One of life's great challenges is to improve our ability to understand other people and enter sympathetically into their lives. . . . Christ in our lives expands our sensitivity and enriches our awareness of other people."

—The Rev. Christopher H. Andrews, Baton Rouge, La.

* * *

"In every town and hamlet and city, we have a responsibility to welcome back the lost, to meet them where they are. We are the ones given the joy of being followers of Christ."

—United Methodist Bishop George W. Bashore, Pittsburgh Area

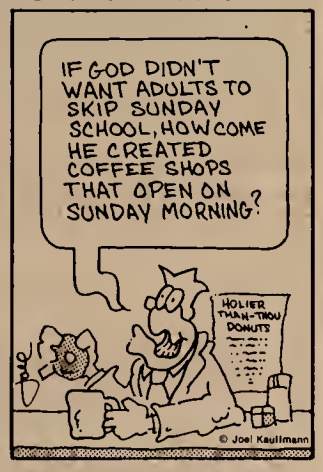
* * *

"God intervenes in life to redeem life, not to condemn it."

—United Methodist Bishop Louis W. Schowengerdt, Northwest Texas-New Mexico Area

* * *

Pontius' Puddle



"Being the Youth Coordinator . . . doesn't mean I only show up at the church twice a month. My door is always open to [teens], and my husband isn't sure if we have three kids or 15."

—Bonnie Yeager, Aristes UMC, Mt. Carmel, Pa.

Faithfully yours

I've rarely seen an act of such generosity!

When we at the Reporter received a letter recently which began, "Confession time!" we braced ourselves for what might follow.

Foolish us. What actually followed in the letter—plus what was enclosed—**John A. Lovelace** was one of the most outstanding examples of generosity we could remember having seen in years.

It seems that this woman—I'll call her Jane—had begun receiving a free copy of the Reporter some six years ago—"free" meaning that someone else paid for her to receive it as a member of one of United Methodism's general-agency governing boards.

Through some kind of gremlin manipulations that only printers and circulation-list people know, Jane soon was receiving seven copies per week—none of which she personally paid for. Rather than waste or trash them, she shared her extra copies with friends in her local church in a small New England town.

After a while she wearied of doing this. But, according to her letter, "Then I was afraid if I mentioned this to you that all the copies would cease coming."

So Jane "confessed" to her unsolicited abundance.

She sent us mailing labels from all seven of the most recent issues and said she needed only one copy.

But enclosed with the letter and the labels was a check for $860.00 payable to the Reporter!

As she calculated it, that represented six years at $20 per year (actually higher than the Reporter's single-subscription charge has ever been) times seven issues per week plus—yes, plus!—a continuing subscription for 1991-92.

I happened to be the staff member who received a photocopy of Jane's letter from our circulation department. I immediately wrote her saying, among other things, "I know of no rule of law, commerce or logic which would require you to pay for something you didn't order, but you've done so—and some extra!"

The Reporter's new Communications Center will have a central gallery where major benefactors to the Reporter and major figures in its stalwart history can be recognized. I hope there's at least a small corner where this woman's generosity can be noted.

Jane, I have a confession, too. I think you're incredible!

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

Mr. Lovelace is Managing Editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"When Jesus heard this he marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that followed Him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." (RSV)

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : ____

(Last week's answer: Philippians 2:3)

Readings for week of Aug. 5

Monday: Psalms 34:1-10
Tuesday: Psalms 34:11-22
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 12:1-15a
Thursday: 2 Samuel 12:15b-24
Friday: John 6:24-35
Saturday: Ephesians 4:1-6
Sunday: Ephesians 4:7-16

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

This Christmas, join in a vision of a brighter tomorrow!

Your purchases now will help support this vital project of The United Methodist Church!

Everyone loves to send and receive cards at Christmas. Giving and/or using these special Africa University Commemorative Cards is an excellent way to share your feelings with your loved ones and contribute to an important cause.

Special Commemorative Christmas Cards

Order today in support of the Library Fund! Each set contains 12 cards—3 each of 4 similar designs.

The cards are attractive and include a small commemoration of the Africa University on the back

For each set sold at $2.95, The United Methodist Publishing House will donate 50c; for each set sold in groups of 10 or more at $2.00, 25c will be donated.

AU1-280586 Stained Glass Set. *May the Joy and Peace of Christmas be yours now and throughout the coming year*

AU1-280597. Shepherds Set. *May wonder and joy enrich your way now and always.*

AU1-280600. Embossed Assortment. *With best wishes for your happiness at Christmas and throughout the New Year*

AU1-280611. Christmas Cameos *With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year*

AU1-280564 Bethlehem Series. *Wishing you happiness and joy at Christmas.*

For each box sold at $9.95, The United Methodist Publishing House will donate $1.25; for each box sold in groups of 10 or more at $7.25, 75c will be donated AU1-313200.

***NEW!* Special African Drummer Boy Commemorative Christmas Cards**

Pictures an African Drummer Boy with the Baby Jesus in the manger. The message, *May the joyful sounds of Christmas brighten your New Year,* is accompanied by "The Legend of the African Drummer Boy." The 5" x 7" cards of one design are packaged in a box of 18. Purchase several boxes for your personal use or as gifts.

Here's Another Way You and Your Church Can Get Involved In the Africa University Library Project

Also available are Commemorative Bibles and Hymnal for gifts or for personal use. Get everyone involved by making the Africa University Library a churchwide project! Ask for details.

Satisfaction guaranteed! Add your state's sales tax. For orders up to $30, add $2.50 for transportation, to $40, add $3.00, etc.

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Faith watch

WCC CHIEF TO RETIRE IN '92: An 18-person committee met in mid-July to begin looking for a replacement for World Council of Churches chief executive the Rev. **Emilio Castro**, a Uruguayan Methodist, who will retire in December 1992. Chair of the committee is Dr. **Janice Love**, a United Methodist layperson and professor at the University of South Carolina. Dr. Castro will visit South Africa in October at the invitation of the South African Council of Churches, becoming the first in his office to do so since 1960.

HELP FOR LIBERIA: A group of 46 former United Methodist missionaries to Liberia has called on the U.S. government to help the war-torn African country. Their resolution, approved at their recent reunion at Depauw University, Greencastle, Ind., asks the United States to facilitate a negotiated settlement between parties involved in Liberia's civil war, either through the U.N. Security Council or a similar forum. The former missionaries also want funds appropriated by Congress for reconstruction of Liberia to be released and they called upon the United States to support Liberian efforts to restore a democratic government. The missionaries raised just over $3,000 for United Methodist emergency work in Liberia and presented a $2,510 check for Ganta Hospital, in memory of the late Rev. **B.B. Cofield**, who served there.

JOURNALISTS CHALLENGED: Forty Christian communicators from 22 countries, members of the World Association for Christian Communication, recently urged journalists worldwide to promote peace, justice and international understanding. Chief executive the Rev. **Carlos A. Valle**, an Argentinian Methodist, called on Christian communicators to help churches recover the ability to suffer and to struggle with the oppressed and the marginalized. Speaking for Canadian Indians, the Rev. **Stan McKay**, a United Church minister, said, "In their work overseas, North American churches stress the need to respect other cultures, but in their own back yard the oppression, restrictions and lack of communication continues."

DRAPER HEADS BAPTIST UNIT: The Rev. **James T. Draper Jr.**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, in mid-July was elected without opposition to become the eighth president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. He succeeds **Lloyd Elder**, who will retire this month after a stormy tenure battling trustees of the agency which historically has served as a theological bellwether for Southern Baptists. Dr. Draper, the 1982-84 president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was considered the frontrunner for the post because of his political clout in the denomination and his conservative theological position.

BAPTIST MISSIONS TO MOVE: Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board voted July 17 to move their national offices from midtown Atlanta to a 34-acre, $1.3 million site 22 miles north in Alpharetta, Ga. Plans call for a five-story, 175,000-square-foot office building to be complete in 1995 in time for the 150th anniversary of the agency. The national evangelism and church-starting board has been in its current offices since 1968.

Compiled from news and staff reports

'Whom have you brought to Christ?'

4,000 World Methodists challenged to avoid being a 'maintenance church'

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SINGAPORE—The question confronted Methodists from around the world with the force of the equatorial heat outside.

"Whom have you brought to Christ?" demanded Bishop Lawi Imathiu of the Methodist Church in Kenya during his sermon opening the 16th World Methodist Conference July 24.

Bishop Imathiu's question hung over the gathering as a judgment and a challenge.

The judgment manifested itself in the bishop's next question:

"Why are we only 54 million five years after Nairobi (site of the most recent world Methodist conference) when we should be 108 million?" he asked.

Then he answered: "This is your failure and mine."

Noting the "urgent cry of the world for the Living Word of God," the bishop, who is outgoing president of the World Methodist Council, urged the 4,000-plus Methodists in attendance to "steer clear of becoming a maintenance church and win souls for Christ!"

Bishop Imathiu

The challenge of Bishop Imathiu's question was picked up three days later by the Rev. H. Eddie Fox of Nashville, Dr. Fox is World Evangelism Director of the World Methodist Council.

To frequent outbursts of applause he unveiled the council's new initiative named "The Dawning Millennium for World Evangelism."

"Does it matter to us whether other people know Jesus?" Dr. Fox asked. "Then let the redeemed of the Lord say so!"

The Dawning Millennium emphasis, to be launched in early 1992 around the world, includes a variety of program activities aimed at encouraging, training and motivating world Methodists for evangelistic outreach.

Eddie Fox

■ In preparation for the program elements of the Dawning Millennium, Methodists around the world are being called to a regular period of prayer and fasting based on the weekly model of John Wesley. This emphasis begins in Lent 1992.

■ In 1993, the Dawning Millennium will be launched with simultaneous preaching and testifying missions in 2,000 churches around the world, involving both indigenous and international leaders.

■ A major new study, "Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So!" aimed at preparing clergy and laity for more intensive telling of the story of Jesus, has been adopted for worldwide use during the emphasis. The study is intended to help Methodists recover their voice and witness to the Gospel.

■ A series of regional and international evangelism seminars will be held by the World Methodist Evangelism Institute. The institute, based at Emory University in Atlanta and directed by the Rev. George Morris, will hold some 20 seminars reaching indigenous leaders in virtually every country represented in the World Methodist Council.

■ The fifth International Christian Youth Conference has been scheduled for 1994 in Europe with a focus on preparing Methodist youth for the Dawning Millennium in 93 countries.

■ Ongoing World Methodist Evangelism thrusts such as annual Pentecost celebrations, the development of resources and a wide variety of regional programs under leadership of 15 regional secretaries of World Evangelism will continue.

Coverage of the 16th World Methodist Conference in Singapore will continue in the next issue of the Reporter.

Church leader blasts nuclear tests in Pacific

Reporter Staff Special

SINGAPORE—The message of the gentle man from Samoa was anything but gentle.

"How can you say that nuclear testing has caused no hazard to the Pacific islands when people tell of sweeping up hundreds of fish poisoned by the blasts?" asked the Rev. Siatua Leuluaialii, president of the Methodist Church of Samoa.

"How can you say there is no hazard when people must sleep beside the toilets because of the reactions of their bodies to the poisoned fish?"

Mr. Leuluaialii's witness to the destruction of God's creation ignited what had been a heavy opening day at the 16th World Methodist Conference of exhortations against ecological irresponsibility.

His contention that the exploitation of the Pacific islands continues because of racism drew a moving repentance from the Rev. Donald English of Great Britain, incoming chairman of the World Methodist Council.

"I said your presentation would be exciting, but I must amend that to say disturbing," Dr. English said.

Then, in a voice choked with emotion, he added:

"As much as any one person can speak for the colonizing nations, we're sorry."

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

SINGAPORE—The Dawning Millennium emphasis (logo shown above) was introduced July 27 at the World Methodist Conference. The initiative is to be launched in early 1992. It includes a variety of program activities aimed at encouraging, training and motivating world Methodists for evangelistic outreach.

World Methodist leaders plan for global gathering

Reporter Staff Special

SINGAPORE—Leaders of Methodism worldwide will come together in 1994 for the first of what they hope will be a continuing series of gatherings that will give world Methodists a more unified voice in global affairs.

More than 100 bishops and presidents of Wesleyan denominations agreed July 23 to a global gathering that will encompass four purposes:

■ Spiritual renewal for those leaders who bear unique oversight responsibilities in their respective churches;

■ Discussion of emerging world issues, with the prospect of mobilizing Methodists globally in a social witness to those issues;

■ Exchange of mission strategies, and

■ Information sharing.

Two sites are under consideration for the event: England, the historic birthplace of Methodism, or Korea, in recognition of the explosive growth of the Korean Methodist Church.

The 1994 global gathering had its genesis in a 1988 meeting in St. Louis, Mo., among bishops of The United Methodist Church and its affiliated autonomous churches.

United Methodist Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn (Nebraska Area) was appointed by that meeting to chair planning for a global event that would involve all churches of Wesleyan heritage.

He was unable to attend the July 23 session in Singapore because he is recovering from heart bypass surgery. In his place he asked Bishops Ben Oliphint (Houston Area) and David J. Lawson (Wisconsin Area) to serve as keynoter and convener, respectively.

In his speech, read by Bishop Oliphint, Bishop Hearn pointed out that, historically, church leaders have come together to discuss issues, plan for future action and, settle controversies.

Bishop Hearn suggested that the July 23 strategy session of bishops and presidents decide the value, purposes, structure and planners for the proposed global gathering of leaders.

One representative from each of five regions of the world will serve on the planning team.

Bishop Lawson pointed out that the "beautiful dynamics and cross-fertilization" of the July 23 strategy session hold promise that the global gathering will be of value to Methodists worldwide.

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

What is World Methodist Council?

What is the World Methodist Council?

The council comprises 64 churches worldwide with common roots in the Methodist tradition, including United churches such as those in Canada and Australia.

The 500-member council derives its advisory and administrative authority from its member churches. Those churches include more than 54 million Methodists in 93 countries around the world.

The council meets at least once every five years and convenes the World Methodist Conference which meets at the same time and place as the council.

The conference's purpose is to inform more Methodists of the works of the council and to provide a sense of unity among the Methodist people through education, inspiration and fellowship.

—Adapted from the Program of the 16th World Methodist Conference, Singapore, July 24-31, 1991

UM evangelicals affirm racial inclusiveness

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

WASHINGTON—Good News, the unofficial evangelical caucus of United Methodists, "takes the sin of racism seriously and affirms an inclusive church."

So said the Rev. James V. Heidinger II, the organization's executive secretary and editor of "Good News" magazine.

Further, Mr. Heidinger told the July 22-25 national Good News convocation he takes personal responsibility for the "mistake" of including the General Commission on Religion and Race among several churchwide agencies Good News may recommend that the 1992 General Conference dismantle to reduce expenditures.

Mr. Heidinger said United Methodist media had reported earlier this year that Good News would make such a suggestion.

The Good News board of directors clarified its stand by stating that it would not recommend dissolution of the Religion and Race commission.

This was not the only Good News action related to racial issues.

The 40-member board elected two additional ethnic minority people to the board, bringing ethnic representation to five.

The board also approved a $2,000 scholarship for an ethnic minority person at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., for 1991-92.

Evangelicals have not always been known for their ethnic inclusiveness, said keynote speaker the Rev. Tom Skinner.

Mr. Skinner, internationally known as an evangelical speaker and former chaplain for the Washington Redskins, said that when his father tried to attend a conservative Christian college, and later a conservative Christian seminary, not one in the country would accept him because of his race.

The most difficult colleges in America for an ethnic minority person who wants a conservative Christian education to get into are the "Bible believing colleges," he said.

And the "Bible believing, evangelical churches" are still the most segregated churches in America, he continued.

"We cannot say to the world we can solve the problems of reconciliation when we, the people of God, have not been reconciled," he said.

In addition to urging the reconciliation, he urged church people to stop preaching to each other and go out into the "hedges and byways" and invite people in.

"The people of God must be prepared to preach the good news in a decadent society so you've got to go where it's decadent. . . . The good news must be proclaimed at the gates of hell," Mr. Skinner said.

But so often, he said, "We are scared to go into the world. Scared to go where the sinners are."

When he concluded with an altar call for "those who want to be set free to proclaim this good news, transcending culture and race and go into the world," more than 100 of the 500 participants responded.

One Good News board member who is black, the Rev. Randolph Jones of Philadelphia, told the Reporter he agreed with much of what Mr. Skinner said but he added that the situation is changing.

He said he was very suspicious of Good News when he joined the board. The organization had a "right wing" and "reactionary" image to many blacks, he said.

"I have to be honest. I did not find that to be true. Theologically, blacks are right where Good News is. But politically, there are differences."

As one who worked with Black Panthers and Muslims in the 1960s and 1970s, Mr. Jones said he had seen many injustices in the 50s and 60s.

"Many evangelicals were terribly silent," he said, "or overtly or covertly involved in segregation or racism.

"However, there has been a change on the part of evangelicals. . . . Good News has become more open to having ethnics involved at a higher level. They are much more open to being more inclusive."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

WASHINGTON—Four leaders of the "Good News" movement prepare for a White House briefing. Left to right: The Rev. James V. Heidinger II, Good News executive secretary; the Rev. Paul Morell, Good News board member; Faye Short, president of the Evangelical Coalition for United Methodist Women; and the Rev. George Anderson, co-chair of the recent Good News convocation.

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

BRITON NAMED: The general secretary of the Home Mission Division of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the Rev. **Donald English,** was named July 24 to lead the World Methodist Council's executive committee for the next five years. His unanimous election came as the 500-member council met just before the opening of the 16th World Methodist Conference. He succeeds Bishop **Lawi Imathiu** of Kenya as chairperson of the 150-member executive committee, the council's ongoing administrative and policy-making body. United Methodists elected to World Methodist Council offices were **Ewing Werlein** of Houston, treasurer; **Frances M. Alguire** of Downers Grove, Ill., a member of the presidium, and the Rev. **Joe Hale,** re-elected general secretary (see related stories elsewhere in this issue).

HISTORICAL SHRINES: Addition of three United Methodist historic shrines and one landmark to the present lists of locations is being proposed by the church's General Commission on Archives and History. The 1992 General Conference will be asked to add to the present 22 shrines Cox Memorial United Methodist Church in Hallowell, Maine, home church of the first overseas missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Bishop John Seybert/Flat Rock Cluster near Bellevue, Ohio, recognizing the first bishop following Jacob Albright in the Evangelical Association, and the Wesleyan College Cluster in Macon, Ga., chartered in 1836 and a pioneer in women's history. Recommended for addition to the roster of 10 landmarks would be the Willamette Mission site in Oregon.

'ELIZABETH PROJECT': The Rev. **Rhonda VanDyke Colby,** pastor at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Norfolk, Va., has developed a program designed to pair young expectant mothers, particularly teenagers, on a one-to-one basis with experienced volunteers. Known as the "Elizabeth Project," the plan calls for unwed mothers and partners to meet at least twice weekly, once as a group for educational presentations, and once on a social level. The program is a part of the "Hold Out the Lifeline" in the Southern Regional Project on Infant Mortality.

NATIVE AMERICAN LEADER DIES: **John L. Chingman,** founding executive director of the United Methodist Native American Ministry of Presence in Denver, died June 28 of cancer at age 38. A Shoshone Indian from the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, he was a former member of the United Metbodist General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. He was also known nationally as a seminar leader on Native American topics. Funeral and burial were July 2 at Fort Washakie, Wyo.

Angolans want help in planting churches

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

United Methodists in Angola want your help in planting new churches in a mission field dormant until recently because of civil war.

The Rev. Robert Harman, chief executive of the General Board of Global Ministries World Division, made that assessment following a June visit to Angola by a team of mission board staff and directors.

The team included the Rev. Randolph Nugent, general secretary; Doreen Tilghman, chief executive of the Africa, Europe and Middle East Region; Bishop J. Lloyd Knox of Birmingham, Ala., World Division president, and the Rev. Sandra Hoke of La Grange, Ill., World Division director.

Dr. Harman told the Reporter that the trip was made at the invitation of United Methodist leaders in Angola following the ceasefire in that country.

Ready to begin programs

Officials of the church's two annual conferences—Eastern Angola and Western Angola—say they are ready to begin more mission programs. That includes receiving new missionaries to the country's war-torn eastern region.

"There's a new effort to reach out particularly to the Eastern conference, since it's just like a new mission field," Dr. Harman said.

Methodism was established in Angola a little over 100 years ago. In 1968, with creation of The United Methodist Church, it became the Angolan Annual Conference with most of its 100,000 members in the western part of the country. Its present episcopal leader, Bishop Emilio J.M. de Carvalho, was elected in 1972.

In 1984, the church's General Conference approved formation of a second annual conference. Bishop Moises Fernandes was elected for the Eastern Angola Conference in 1988.

"There are some 4,000 United Methodists in the Eastern conference," continued Dr. Harman. "But the bishop could not reach them, because of the war.

"The struggles of the life of the church have been reflected in the struggles of the country itself. Angolans are glad a ceasefire has been signed and those struggles are behind them."

Civil war continued

Although the southern African nation became independent from Portugal in 1975, civil war had continued between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which formed the new government, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita).

Unita reportedly received military aid from the United States and South Africa, while the Angolan government was reportedly supported by the Soviet Union and by Cuban troops.

Following the signing of a May peace accord, the two sides agreed to an official ceasefire as a first step toward building a democratic-style multiparty political system, working toward a market economy and creating a unified army.

"It's a new beginning for the United Methodist Church in Angola and the conflicts that plague them are history," said Dr. Harman.

PHOTO BY SANDRA HOKE

ANGOLA—United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries officials Doreen Tilghman (left) and the Rev. Randy Nugent visit with a 95-year-old Angolan woman who attended the Methodist mission school in her country and remembers missionaries from her childhood.

'They've done wonderful things despite war'

Reporter Staff Special

"United Methodists in Eastern Angola have great gratitude to those missionaries who came over and gave their lives," says the Rev. Sandra Hoke, pastor of First United Metbodist Church in La Grange, Ill.

"United Methodists [in this country] have a great opportunity for the linkage we had in the past."

Ms. Hoke visited Angola as part of a mission agency team hearing the needs of Angolan United Methodists (see related story above).

During tbeir visit to the southern Africa country in June, mission board representatives visited in the capital city of Luande with Bishop Emilio de Carvalho. He heads the church's Western Angola Annual Conference and is also president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops.

> ***"The war has been very devastating to the United Methodist Church in Eastern Angola. They have done some wonderful things in that conference, despite the problems of the war."***
> **—Sandra Hoke**

Later the delegation flew to Melange, where tbey were met at the airport by United Methodist Bishop Moises D. Fernandes of the Eastern Angola Conference, other church officials and a choir of some 200 people.

"We sang in a procession all the way from the airport into the city," said Ms. Hoke.

Team members met with Bishop Fernandes and the governor of Melange to identify priorities for mission in eastern Angola. A top priority is the reconstruction of the Quessua complex.

Ms. Hoke told the Reporter that Quessua was once a huge mission complex built and owned by Angolan Methodists that included a school, seminary, agricultural project and hospital.

Following liberation of the country from Portugal in 1975, the complex became state property. Now there is a commitment from the Angolan government to give the mission complex back to the church.

"Quessua has been extremely important to the development of Angola," said Ms. Hoke. "It had the first secondary school for Africans on the continent. Many of today's African's leaders were trained there.

"There is a commitment on both sides to reconstruct Quessua, because parts of it, such as the hospital, are still being run by United Methodists."

Ms. Hoke told the Reporter that the hospital—run without doctors—serves some 20,000 patients a year. The only medical personnel are midwives and nurses.

"They have done the best they can considering there has not been a doctor present for two years," she said. "They have a need for missionary doctors, including those who have specialities."

Angolan United Methodists also requested assistance in rebuilding the Quessua seminary. Right now the most important materials are theological books in Portuguese. Church officials in Melange said they hope to open the school in October.

"They think they may have as many as 15 students, maybe 25 in October," said Ms. Hoke. "The Angolans are asking for anything that will help start the seminary. But they will reopen with whatever they've got."

Ms. Hoke said Eastern Angola conference officials made other requests, including:

- Food and clothes;
- Motor vehicles, including cars for district superintendents in the Eastern conference;
- Tools for evangelism;
- Tractors and agricultural supplies;
- Office materials, especially typewriters in Portuguese.

"The war has been very devastating to the United Methodist Church in Eastern Angola," said Ms. Hoke. "They have done some wonderful things in that conference, despite the problems of the war."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Dana Jones, editor of the Northern Illinois Conference edition of the Reporter, contributed to this story.

Christian puppeteer group learns how to roll with punches

By BETTIE WILSON STORY

Fifty things can go wrong: Tape gets lost on tour, the tent blows in, glue melts in the heat, kids get in the mood to boycott doing their parts.

But each year they gather to learn more from one another with the hope next time for a flawless performance.

If it isn't flawless, enjoy it instead of fearing it, says Tim Chartier, 22, a mime, puppeteer and student at Western Michigan University who says he owes his life to the Fellowship of Christian Puppeteers.

The recent 17th national conference of that organization in Alliance, Ohio, drew more than 200 registrants and staff primarily from Canada and the eastern United States.

They came to United Methodist-related Mount Union College pulling U-Hauls and driving loaded vans with signs like "Kingdom Kids" and "The Puppet Place."

The schedule included 141 workshops as well as daily worship, matinees and evening performances. Among the dozens of skills taught were construction of a variety of types of puppets (70 in one workshop), stages, and dimmer boxes.

Other worships included ventriloquism, scriptwriting, balloon decorating, mime technique, blacklight production, magic in storytelling, props and publicity.

Attending the interdenominational meeting were a number of United Methodist puppeteers.

Mary Ann Ferry, who has made about 200 puppets in six years, does programs on drugs and alcohol awareness in schools.

A member of Deckards United Methodist Church in Cochranton, Pa., she said the puppetry group is supported in schools by the Pennsylvania Council on Alcohol Problems, an Advance Special for designated giving in the United Methodist Western Pennsylvania Conference.

Dawn Stanton got her start providing sign language with Wesley Lamplighters, a puppetry group of Wesley United Methodist Church in Wesleyville, Pa., that performs in nursing homes and churches. Now she designs, crafts and sells puppets and visits people in health care institutions.

Carle Lariccia, who heads the 5-year-old creative worship arts committee, and Bette Goff, seamstress, actress and puppeteer, at Georgetown United Methodist Church in Jenison, Mich., use liturgical dance, mime, drama and puppetry in worship about once a month.

The group organized when the Rev. John R. Smith became interested in "different dimensions in worship," Ms. Lariccia said.

Ms. Lariccia works with volunteers who are "all multi-talented, have families or multi-jobs," she said. "We practice every Sunday after church and there are no sluggards."

Each summer Ms. Lariccia uses her vacation to attend conferences at her own expense "and pick everyone's brains" for new ideas.

Professionals are supported only by their shows.

For instance, Joan Taylor, a United Methodist ventriloquist from Orlando, Fla., travels occasionally for the National Association of Methodist Evangelism with her Sonshine Puppets.

"Make yourself available to Sunday School classes, Vacation Bible School, lay witness missions," she said. "Tell your pastor God has called you to this ministry. Then get ready to see miracles."

Ms. Story is editor of the Central Illinois edition of the Reporter.

PHOTO BY BETTIE WILSON STORY

ALLIANCE, Ohio—UU the clown (Julie Fulton from Navarre, Ohio, kneeling) and her bear find the camels irresistible after their rousing rendition of "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." They were aided by Carle Lariccia (left) and Bette Goff, volunteers in the "GUMie Puppets" ministry at Georgetown United Methodist Church in Jenison, Mich.

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DISCIPLE Bible Study Important to VISION 2000

This week's column is written by the Reverend Larry D. O'Dell, Chairperson of the Board of Discipleship for the Louisiana Annual Conference. Mr. O'Dell is pastor of Farmerville United Methodist Church.

In February, March, and April of 1990, listening posts were held throughout the Conference as a part of Vision 2000. At these listening posts over 1400 laity were asked to share their vision of a vital local congregation and to offer ideas on ways to fulfill this vision. One response to this process was the need for meaningful Bible study.

The Louisiana Conference Board of Discipleship heard this need expressed and responded by offering the DISCIPLE Bible study. While many good Bible studies are available DISCIPLE was chosen. Cokesbury provided a training event for our Annual Conference. In February more than 60 churches sent person(s) to be trained. Scholarships of $200 were provided to 48 churches to help reduce the cost. Scholarship money is still available to help those churches with financial needs to participate in DISCIPLE. You may contact Rev. Leslie Akin in the Conference office for more information.

One question that has been asked recently is "What do we do if our pastor, who received the DISCIPLE training, has moved?" If a trained pastor moves to a church which is not enrolled in DISCIPLE, the cost for this church to enroll is $438.00. The church will receive 12 DISCIPLE study manuals, certificates, pins, and a set of videotapes. If a trained pastor leaves a church which is enrolled in DISCIPLE, the church may send their new pastor or another person to a DISCIPLE training seminar for $250.00. For this fee the person will receive: one DISCIPLE study manual, teacher helps, one certificate, one lapel pin, lodging, meals, and training. Additional DISCIPLE group resources will need to be purchased.

To date 83 churches in our conference are enrolled in the DISCIPLE Bible Study. Add to this the number of churches using other Bible studies and you will see that the vision is in process. Many churches are indicating new vitality as more United Methodists are studying the word of God. I am thankful for all the churches in our Conference that are offering their people the opportunity for in-depth Bible study. If your church is not involved in some type of in-depth Bible study, I pray that you will make it a priority. "If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples." (John 8:31, THE JERUSALEM BIBLE)

Rev. Larry D. O'Dell

The Potato Project

Faith as a Grain of Mustard Seed

When two Virginia pastors received "a clear calling to do something about hunger," they had no idea that by responding to that call they would, by the end of eleven years, have generated 108 million pounds of food for the poor. The Reverend Ray Buchanan, Co-director with the Reverend Ken Horne of the Society of St. Andrew, visited the Louisiana Annual Conference to share their vision and its success with others.

The Society of St. Andrew began in 1979 as a small Christian community determined to practice lifestyles consistent with Christian teachings. With a $15,000 grant from the General Board of Discipleship, Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Horne left their parish ministries to become advocates and educators responsible for the earth's resources. They supported themselves with odd jobs out of an office set up in an old sheep shed.

In 1983, during a workshop on hunger, a potato farmer was moved to donate his "culled" (throw-away) potatoes to feed the hungry after a heated discussion among participants about the amount of food wasted while individuals go hungry. Shortly afterwards, the Society found itself with one-million pounds of potatoes to give to the poor.

Their efforts to raise the funds and organize the drive resulted in the creation of The Potato Project. One year later, they had four-million pounds of potatoes to distribute.

Two years later, in answer to the desire of church people to become more involved with the work, the Society established the Harvest of Hope, an ecumenical gleaning/hunger study retreat program geared to senior high groups. Over 14,000 volunteers have participated in harvesting crops normally left to wither and die on the ground.

These two projects have expanded into forty-five states and several foreign countries. There is also experimentation on true potato seed to use in poorer countries so that farmers there can grow their own produce. They also are working to develop a gleaning network to encourage farmers to donate their produce.

The Society of St. Andrew is an Advance Special Hunger Project of the United Methodist Church. Louisiana United Methodist Men have become involved in the Society's "Meals for Millions" as one of their mission projects.

Like the apostle Andrew who brought to Christ the bags with loaves and fishes to feed the multitudes, The Society of St. Andrew reaches out to provide the overabundance of food produced in this great nation to those most in need. As Mr. Horne says, "Christ's command is very clear regarding what must be done in this area." The success of this "seed faith" demonstrates that many people continue to obey that command.

For additional information, contact The Society of St. Andrew; P.O. Box 329; Big Island, VA 24526; 1-800-333-4597.

Louisiana United Methodists Can Do Their Part

Mr. Michael Ameny

Editor's Note: The following article has been written by Mr. Jim Moore with the Louisiana Methodist World Scholarship.

In Louisiana we think of sweet potatoes, cooked and on the dinner table, as being sweet in taste and orange in color. In Uganda, however, the home of Mr. Michael Ameny, a Louisiana United Methodist World Hunger Scholarship student at LSU, the preference is for the white variety, which contains less sugar. But how does all of this tie together? Well, Mr. Ameny, who is on leave from his job in the Food Science Department at his university in Uganda, is doing research to develop an improved baby food from his native sweet potatoes. For a country which has a problem in feeding its own people and where children are subject to malnutrition, what could be a better project?

It's always a pleasure to talk with the "extra fine" student/scientists holding Louisiana United Methodist World Hunger Scholarships. Mr. Ameny is no exception. He is outgoing, quick to show a good sense of humor, and, of course, he is highly qualified professionally and scholastically. He and his wife Gloria have three children. His favorite hobbies are bicycling and tennis.

Louisiana United Methodist World Hunger Scholarship, also known as FISH (For Indigenous Self Help), an Advance Special (#4457) of the Louisiana Annual Conference, is a program in which scientists from countries which are deficient in food production come to the United States to pursue advanced degrees in subjects relating to food production or nutrition. They are committed, upon graduation, to return to their own countries. Because of FISH they will be much better equipped to fight the causes of hunger. Headquartered at LSU, this ministry is under the direction of Dr. William H. Patrick Jr., Boyd Professor of Marine Sciences. Dr. Patrick is also the founder of the program.

Any group or individual is invited to become a part of this self-help program by contributing toward the cost of supporting the scholars in this long range and broad reaching program. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Dr. Patrick at the Center for Wetland Resources, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803; 504-652-6560.

Church Library Packet Available

As a result of action taken at the 1988 General Conference the General Board of Discipleship and Cokesbury National Marketing are working to provide resources for church librarians. Available now for $3.50 from the Cokesbury Service Center is the Church Library Packet (order number 280768).

Among other materials, the packet contains the following:

- **You Can Have a Church Library** by Maryann Dotts — a guidebook to help persons start or expand church libraries.
- Catalogs from The Upper Room, Discipleship Resources, and Cokesbury.
- **Planbook** — a resource that describes curriculum resources published by The United Methodist Publishing House.
- **Curriculum Resources and Your Church Library** — a leaflet describing ways to use United Methodist curriculum in the library.
- Information from the **Church and Synagogue Library Association**, which has resources to help persons develop the church library.
- **Church Library News.**
- **Church Library Guild** information.
- **The Structure of the United Methodist Church** — a booklet that provides information about the organization of the church and explains how to get in touch with general agencies and various resource groups.

For additional information about the packet, contact Karen Greenwaldt, Section on Christian Education and Age-Level Ministries, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202.

Maria Denise Church — Black College Fund Ambassador

Ms. Maria Denise Church travelled to five Annual Conferences during May, June and July to say "thank you" on behalf of The United Methodist Church's Black College Fund. Maria was selected to be a representative of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in the Lina H. McCord Summer Intern program. The program is named in honor of Mrs. Lina McCord, a long-time staff person of the General Board. The Intern program provides opportunity for selected students enrolled in one of the eleven historically Black colleges and universities related to the United Methodist Church to give a personal word of thanks as well as to familiarize United Methodists with the Black College Fund and the colleges the fund supports.

The Black College Fund is an apportioned fund. Its purpose is to provide the eleven historically Black colleges and universities related to the United Methodist Church with financial support for current operating expenses and capital improvements. The fund plays a major role in assuring the survival, growth and development of the following significant and historic institutions:

Bennett College
Greensboro, NC

Bethune-Cookman College
Daytona Beach, FL

Claflin College
Orangeburg, SC

Meharry Medical College
Nashville, TN

Paine College
Augusta, GA

Philander Smith College
Little Rock, AR

Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, GA

Dillard University
New Orleans, LA

Rust College
Hollysprings, MS

Wiley College
Marshall, TX

Huston-Tillotson College
Austin, TX

Miss Church is a native of New Orleans and is the daughter of the Reverend and Mrs. Percell Church Sr. Rev. Church is the pastor of the Philips Memorial United Methodist Church. Maria is a third-generation Dillard student. She is majoring in accounting with a minor in business management. She is a Dillard University Academic Scholar (having maintained a 4.0 scholastic average in her sophomore year), a member of Dillard's Concert and University Choirs, and is a Local Layspeaker of the United Methodist Church. Miss Church is one of ten persons nationwide chosen for the distinguished Religious Heritage of America Award.

When asked to comment on her experience as a Summer Intern, Maria said that she had "gained a greater love for the United Methodist Church and a stronger faith in Almighty God."

Miss Maria Denise Church

Around the Conference

Shown pictured are the members of the Care Team from First UMC in Lake Providence. The group recently underwent a 12-hour training course entitled: "Equipping Lay People for Ministry," led by the Rev. James Evans. The Care Team will share in pastoral care-giving with the sick, homebound, bereaved and inactive and prospective members. The Rev. John M. Downs is pastor.

During the past school year, First UMC in Hammond held a Sunday evening fellowship called "Sunday Night Live." This event included activities planned for all age groups, pre-k through adults. Children rotated through a lesson time, crafts, and choir rehearsal. The UMYF also held its meetings. Adults engaged in studies which consisted of a month-long series on United Methodism and later Advent and Lenten studies. The Rev. Charles B. Humphreys is pastor.

Mr. Trues Lee, a member of Heflin UMC for over half a century, has kept a perfect Sunday School attendance for over 38 years. He has also served as the church's Sunday School Superintendent for many years. Trying to establish her own record is Miss Kristi Leigh Woods who has maintained a perfect attendance for eight years. She is a student at Elm Grove Junior High School. The Rev. Judy Bazer is pastor.

Editorial

Arms pact: Amen, but . . .

"Amen!" and "caution!" to a recent remark by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Mr. Gorbachev made the remark last week after he and President Bush signed a historic pact to reduce their two countries' stockpiles of nuclear weapons by one-third during the next seven years.

He described the agreement as the "end of the infrastructure of fear" that has plagued the planet for at least 40 years since the advent of nuclear weapons.

We applaud and partly share the Soviet leader's optimism.

The pact marks a formal watershed in U.S.-Soviet relations. Throughout this century, interaction between the two has been burdened by mutual distrust. Since the 1950s, the two superpowers have engaged in a spiraling build-up of nuclear weapons whose combined firepower could destroy the world many times over.

Hence, Christians and others who have prayed fervently for such a day should view the arms treaty as authentic cause for lessened fear of planet-threatening nuclear war.

Indeed, we should thank God for what amounts to an example from politics of the biblical theme of *metanoia*—a "change of direction" or "conversion" away from a path to cataclysm toward a path of cooperation and enhanced global stability.

Nevertheless, a caution: Viewed in larger perspective, the importance of the U.S.-Soviet treaty, in the short run at least, is likely to be more symbolic than substantive.

In light of the proliferation of weapons worldwide, the pact deals with merely a small part of the overall ability of nations, including our own, to wage devastating wars.

Even with a lessening of U.S. and Soviet nuclear stockpiles, many such weapons will continue to exist, including some controlled by countries unwilling to dismantle them.

Moreover, stockpiles of other highly destructive munitions, including chemical and biological weapons, continue to be sought, particularly by nations that lack economic and/or technical means to acquire nuclear devices.

We as Christian peacemakers are called to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" in the face of such worldly dangers.

As "innocent doves," we should take time in our individual and corporate worship lives to lift up the U.S.-Soviet arms agreement as a divine sign that, with God's help, we can indeed work, even with former enemies, to safeguard planet Earth.

As "wise serpents," however, we should regard the treaty as a beginning, not an end, and urge public leaders to take additional concrete steps to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction.

This 1987 gift from former U.S. President Reagan to Soviet President Gorbachev was dedicated to "global peace." An arms reduction pact signed signed last week by President Bush and Mr. Gorbachev promotes that vision. However, Christians dare not relax efforts to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction.

My Witness

Little things mean the most in ministry

By CAROLYN S. HENDRICK

It was a hot, dry, Saturday afternoon when I entered the church recently to prepare the bulletin for Sunday morning worship.

The week I had just finished had been a decathlon of activities. My sermon was rambling through my head and the voices of my professors were still ringing in my ears. But such is the life of a student pastor in seminary.

When I opened the door to the church, I could see that the men's fellowship breakfast had stretched into an afternoon of rewiring the church.

They were working intently

Four men wore beads of perspiration on their foreheads as each worked intently in the dim light to finish the task before the "Second Saturday" evening activities would begin.

I walked to my study and then I heard one of them talking to another. He said, "I really don't know why I waited so long." And then, they chuckled to themselves.

I remembered that I had once wondered the same thing. Each Sunday, I had watched three of them struggle with the call of God as we saog the invitational hymn.

They worked side by side

Now, it was Saturday and the three of them were working side by side in the Lord's house. Monday through Friday, they all work in different places, but one Sunday had changed the lives of each of them and now they held one thing in common.

All three of them had been recently baptized through a profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, they were together, spending their day off for the Lord. They were laughing and joking with one another.

I thought about something that a previous pastor had told me as I struggled with my call to ministry.

He said, "It's not the big things that most people would expect that has meant the most to me in the ministry; it's the little unexpected things that no one else would really understand."

Listening to the three men's relaxed conversation, I looked at the fourth man in the group who is also my clergy spouse.

We both understood the blessing of the moment and we smiled at one another. My heart sang as I thought, "the little things really do mean the most!"

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Carolyn S. Hendrick is minister of First United Methodist Church, Big Sandy, Texas (Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Letters to the Editor

Contrasting perspectives on declining membership

The July 19 editorial regarding United Methodist membership losses properly expressed concern and urged action.

However, I have been a United Methodist minister for 48 years and from the beginning I believed the church to be overly dominated by (to borrow an expression said to be from Texas) "the Book of Numbers, not the Book of Acts."

Given honest analysis, some of the loss is from the courageous positions the church takes on racial justice, the rights of women and the oppressed.

I am honored to be in a church that values "acts" over "numbers." As we attempt to gain membership, let it not be at the expense of positions others may have eschewed to gain numbers.

Gilbert Y. Taverner
Concord, Massachusetts

Are losses really 'tragic'?

In your July 26 editorial you were so distressed about the United Methodist Church losing about 70,000 members per year that you referred to the losses as a "spiritual tragedy."

Your statements that a loss in UMC membership is a spiritual tragedy makes the assumption that people who leave the UMC drop out of church life and their relationship with Christ. That isn't necessarily the case.

Members want to belong to and support a church or denomination that preaches the Gospel and takes strong biblical stands on moral issues.

Perhaps many members, depending on their own individual situation, perceive that these qualities are missing in the UMC and are voting with their feet and moving to other churches.

For such people, leaving can be a spiritual blessing rather than a spiritual tragedy. We have to remember that a person's relationship with Christ is infinitely more important than what denomination they are affiliated with.

The United Methodist denomination could disappear and Christ's church would continue undaunted.

Richard Crow
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Editorial candor affirmed

I commend the candor of your editorial concerning the decline of our church (see UMR, July 19).

To face the cause of membership loss and accept responsibility for that condition is the first step toward renewal. For too long our church has refused to recognize the real cause for our precipitous decline over the past 25 years.

God has not abandoned us; we have abandoned Him and thus the prosperity and growth experienced in the Methodist movement of the 19th century and early 20th century has ceased.

If the church and its clergy will reverse the focus of our denomination from that of social activism to that of spirit-filled, evangelical fervor, I predict that there will be a revival in our denomination that will lead to a new birth.

Without new direction, we will still be discussing the reasons for the decline of our church 10 years from now.

Ralph Walton
Granbury, Texas

New methods called for

I think new methods of seeking members are in order. Unfortunately, the faction that believes this appears to be a small one.

People think in terms of increases in fund raisers and pledges rather than increases in membership.

I think that the membership problem has not received the attention and resources that it warrants.

Robert Underwood
Springfield, Massachusetts

Oops!

Somebody slipped two decimals in reporting The United Methodist Church's decline during 1990.

The actual loss was 0.7 percent, not the 0.007 percent reported in the caption under the map illustrating the July 19 article headlined, "20 conferences buck U.S. membership decline."

Lorraine S. Abbott
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, must be original and must carry the signature and address of the author.

The editors reserve the right to edit, condense or reject any letters received.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Analysis

World Methodist conflict rooted in 'face'

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SINGAPORE—Imagine people from everywhere in the world in your home. Think of their languages and customs. How would you communicate with them?

Now shade your picture with the characteristics of a common faith in Christ. What do you envision?

Cynthia B. Astle

For the 16th World Methodist Conference, such a vision became a reality in a cultural crossroads confronted over and over by kinship under the Cross.

The once-in-five-years gathering proved to be, in reality, two meetings under the banner of a single conclave.

Cultural diversity celebrated

The conference experienced by a majority of the 4,000 participants was one in which each other's cultural diversity was celebrated in worship and in the small groups known as "pondoks," a Malay word meaning a close, caring community.

Participants exchanged pins from their respective churches. They shared stories of faith and family. They marked one another's addresses in the conference directory for future communication.

Among those 4,000 or so conference participants, however, were some 500 people elected to represent their denominations as policymakers on the World Methodist Council—the "other meeting."

Delegates struggled

In that meeting, council delegates struggled and often stumbled over each other's diverse ways of making decisions on how to witness to the Gospel in the world.

A major conflict during the council's deliberations was the debate and ultimate embarrassment of efforts to witness to religious liberty in Singapore (see related stories elsewhere in this issue).

At the heart of the conflict lay the innately Asian concept of "face" or reputation.

"Face" motivated the conference's Singaporean hosts to stage an elaborate welcoming dinner for the delegates. "Face" also spurred an equally impressive "Festival of Methodism in Asia" in which Asian Methodists presented slides, songs and dances of their countries and churches.

Yet, conference observers asserted, such signals of "face" were overlooked by the conference leadership when it came time to deliberate the issue of Singapore's religious liberty.

One Singaporean pastor pointed out that World Methodist Council leaders neglected to put into place the kind of guidelines which would have prevented the embarrassment that resulted from premature news of the council's deliberations on matters affecting their hosts.

Efforts marked by pain

As a result, the international gathering's effort to achieve a united voice for world Methodism was marked by great pain. Often during the seesawing deliberations it appeared that differences of culture would triumph over unity in Christ.

Yet in the final two days of the often-stormy gathering, the two different meetings being experienced by the delegates came together around the ideas expressed by one keynote speaker, United Methodist Bishop Ruediger Minor of Leipzig, Germany.

"The church is not a place for competition but cooperation," said Bishop Minor in his talk titled "What Does It Mean to Be the Body of Christ Today?"

"The church is not a body of spiritual specialists but a body of those accepted by Christ, and so we must accept one another. Christ is using this imperfect church to achieve His purpose for the world."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations." (RSV)

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
	— :	—

(Last week's answer: Luke 7:9)

Readings for week of Aug. 12

Monday: Psalms 143:1-8
Tuesday: Psalms 143-9-12
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 18:1-5
Thursday: 2 Samuel 18:6-15
Friday: John 6:35, 41-51
Saturday: Ephesians 4:25-29
Sunday: Ephesians 4:30-5:2

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Faith watch

LOST AND FOUND: At any gathering as large as the 16th World Methodist Conference with an enrollment of approximately 4,000 some items are bound to be left behind by participants. Before the conference ended July 31 in Singapore, the program secretary, the Rev. **John Barrett** of Great Britain, announced the finding of several Bibles, personal organizers (the crowd laughed at that description), cameras, clothes and eyeglasses. "If you're still respectably dressed and can see your way there, check the lost and found," Dr. Barrett advised.

WCC REORGANIZING: Fifty international religious leaders, including two United Methodist laywomen, were in Geneva, Switzerland, during July to draft a reorganization of the World Council of Churches. **Janice Love**, government professor at the University of South Carolina, and **Diana Eck**, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard University, helped devise a plan that calls for creating four major units of the WCC to replace the existing three. The proposal also calls for realignment of staff and volunteers to make the WCC's work "more transparent and more clearly understood," Dr. Love said. The plan will be presented to the next WCC Central Committee regular meeting Sept. 20-27 in Geneva.

MODERATE SCHOOL READY: The new Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va., established by moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention who object to fundamentalist control of seminaries, will open Sept. 11 with up to 40 students. President **Thomas Graves**, a former professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., said three full-time professors and four adjunct professors are on the faculty. He said the new school's $550,000 first-year budget comes mainly from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Southern Baptist moderates.

SUMMIT VIGIL RETURNS: As the presidents of the United States and the Soviet Union met in Moscow last week, Christian leaders of the two countries held their fifth joint prayer vigil since the 1985 **Reagan-Gorbachev** Geneva summit. The "church summit" was led by the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. and an Orthodox/Protestant Soviet coalition. The Rev. **J. Martin Bailey**, NCC communications chief, said the services at Resurrection Church drew crowds of Russian Christians and several busloads of tourists from the United States and Europe.

SEPARATION SUPPORTED: Religious practices should not be sponsored by government even if they represent the beliefs of a majority of citizens, says a U.S. Supreme Court brief from Americans United for the Separation of Church and State and the Council on Religious Freedom. The "original intent" of the Constitution was to protect individual rights by removing them from the control of the democratic process, says the brief, filed in the case of **Lee v. Weisman**. The case questions whether public school graduation prayers violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

HETEROSEXUALS SOUGHT: The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, whose membership consists mainly of gays and lesbians, plans rallies to evangelize non-Christians and to "tell heterosexuals they have a place in that church," said the Rev. **Troy Perry**, 51, founder and moderator. He said in Phoenix, where the denomination recently held its biennial general conference, that the first rallies will be held late next year in Dallas, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Orange County, Calif. About 15 percent of the 27,000-member denomination is heterosexual.

CHURCHMAN OPPOSES LAW: In a carefully worded court brief that avoids condoning homosexual activity, a top official of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) argues that Kentucky's sodomy law is unconstitutional because it favors the moral view of some religious groups at the expense of others. A friend-of-the-court brief was filed in a Kentucky Supreme Court case last week by the Rev. **James Andrews**, stated clerk for the 2.8 million-member denomination based in Louisville, Ky.

World Methodists' 10,000 tongues sing faith

By ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

See related coverage below and Analysis on Page 2.

SINGAPORE—Charles Wesley never could have imagined it!

Instead of "a thousand tongues" to sing the Redeemer's praise, 10,000 voices from every continent gathered in the glistening Singapore indoor stadium July 28 to sing, pray and hail Jesus Christ as God's Living Word.

An estimated 7,000 Singapore Methodists joined the 3,000 persons registered for the 16th World Methodist Conference for what Bishop Ho Chee Sin of the host church called a "Methodist family event," intended to "bind us closer to one another and our great and living God."

It was the first conference in Asia in the 110-year history of World Methodism.

More than 50 banners from World Methodist Council bodies led the opening processional.

A 500-voice choir from Singapore Methodist churches, the Anglo-Chinese School and Junior College, the Voices of Youth from the United States and the Anglo-Chinese College Concert Band, all under the chairmanship of Sam Liew, led the music.

In the principal sermon of the rally, the Rev. William K. Quick, senior minister of Metropolitan United Methodist Church in Detroit, called on Methodists around the globe to "leave the safe sanctuary of our churches and once again take Christ to the people."

The "greatest unused power of the church—its laity—is laid waste," he said.

Citing a pollster's report that 94 percent of the people in the United States profess to believe in God, Dr. Quick said: "We don't need any more people in the United States to believe in God. We need those who already profess belief to live out their discipleship."

Speaking at the same rally, Bishop Raul Ruiz Avila of Mexico said Methodists in that land "believe we are called to be a movement of the Spirit that goes on, and not a monument which is stagnant, never moves unless it is carried, (and) goes nowhere and sometimes obstructs the way."

Monuments, said Bishop Ruiz, "are to be left behind but we Methodists should, as pilgrims, move forward."

The Singapore church was host one evening to a 10-course Chinese banquet attended by 4,000 persons. Another night was devoted to a festival of Methodism in Asia.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

SINGAPORE—A banner representing The Methodist Church of India helps lead the processional opening the 16th World Methodist Conference. Above right, a brass choir sings out a fanfare accompanying the processional. Below right are women from the host church, the Methodist Church of Singapore.

Religious liberty action proves tough

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SINGAPORE—The World Methodist Council took a stand to support religious liberty in this strictly regulated island republic, but it was not the kind of direct intervention that many representatives had hoped for.

In fact, some participants felt that the council, instead of unleashing its own "singa" ("lion" in the Malay language) had produced a paper tiger.

An initial pointed statement adopted by the council's executive committee was softened in a 70-minute, closed-door session of the full council. The official council action calls for close monitoring of the situation in Singapore and cooperation with Methodists there to promote religious liberty.

Falls short of strategy

The statement fell short of a strategy that council leaders had discussed for some time—to send to Singapore a delegation to meet with government leaders and express objections to repressive policies adopted by the Singaporean government.

This delegation had been envisioned as being similar to World Methodist Council delegations which went to South Africa in 1987 and 1990 to meet with government officials there to protest that nation's legalized system of racial segregation known as apartheid.

Part of the stated reason the World Methodist Council chose to meet in Singapore was to express public "solidarity" with Singaporean Methodists.

However, that strategy fell apart after a major Singaporean daily newspaper reported that the World Methodist Council's executive committee had registered "strong objection" to religious repressions in Singapore.

Because of that report, the episcopal leader of the Methodist Church in Singapore, Bishop Ho Chee Sin, was summoned to the Singapore Home Affairs Ministry to explain the World Methdist Council executive committee's action.

Later that same day Bishop Ho told the World Methodist Council, "The (Singapore) church has been embarrassed, and I have been scandalized."

Despite the fact that executive committee sessions had been openly conducted with reporters present, council leaders contended that the statements adopted by the executive committee were intended to come to the full council for deliberation and were released prematurely by the conference's press officer. It was on the basis of that release that the Singapore newspaper based its report.

No guidelines

During a press conference after the closed session, council leaders acknowledged that they had erred in failing to establish guidelines for the release of information on the sensitive deliberations.

Bishop Ho later thanked the council for its sensitivity to the situation of Singaporeans in amending the earlier actions.

"As a member of the World Methodist Council we stand by its decision," said Bishop Ho. "You have been very gracious, much more than we wished for."

The selection of Singapore as the site for the 16th World Methodist Conference had been under fire since 1987 when Singapore expelled the Christian Conference of Asia for allegedly engaging in divisive activities, including support of liberation movements and pro-Communist organizations.

The Christian Conference of Asia is an autonomous regional ecumenical body whose members include national councils of churches in 17 nations, including Burma, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore and the Philippines. It was formed in 1957 and centralized its operations in 1974 with headquarters in Singapore.

Educator's healing word ends session on high note

Reporter Staff Special

SINGAPORE—"Tens of millions" of Methodists can shake up the world if they will "touch the patient."

That stirring word from the Rev. James T. Laney, president of United Methodist-related Emory University in Atlanta, helped to conclude the often-troubled 16th World Methodist Conference on a high note.

The former dean of Emory's Candler School of Theology moved the conference with a story about a physician who reached an uncommunicative patient by gently touching the man's wasting body.

"The church has to touch the world," Dr. Laney asserted in his keynote address, "How is Jesus Lord of History?"

"It's not always what we most want to do, but there is no communication until there's love. When there's communication there's healing, and healing makes history.

"To say Jesus Christ is lord of history means we have a new way of reckoning history. When we affirm Jesus as lord of history exultantly, it emboldens us."

Dr. Laney encouraged local churches to send mission teams to all parts of the world as a way of "encountering Christ in a new form and face and language.

"So much of the need of the world can be heard today. What will be our response?

"If Jesus Christ is lord of history, our response can't be business as usual."

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Palestine state favored with 'security' for Israel

United Methodist News

SINGAPORE—The World Methodist Council July 30 called for prompt establishment of a Palestinian state while at the same time ensuring that "Israel lives in security and peace."

A message was ordered sent from the council to the U.S. Secretary of State and the Secretary General of the United Nations supporting a Palestinian state.

Member bodies of the World Methodist Council (WMC) are asked to send similar messages.

The resolution also requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to intercede with Israel to allow Palestinian refugees in Jordan to reside in their own land.

Prayers were asked for people of all faiths who are supporting Palestinians in the present crisis.

A separate resolution voiced "deep concern" about "the claim that East Jerusalem now belongs to Israel and the increased confiscation of land in the West Bank in order to accommodate tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants."

All resolutions were adopted on show of hands votes.

The 500-member WMC is made up of representatives from the 65 churches and ecumenical bodies. It speaks for itself and has no authority to legislate for the member churches.

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Milwaukee UMs ease fear, anger after slayings

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Helping people defuse their fear and anger following the investigation of a series of grisly murders is a top priority of the Milwaukee religious community, says a United Methodist district superintendent involved in efforts there.

The Rev. Donald Ott, superintendent of the Milwaukee district in the Wisconsin Annual Conference, said "two prime feelings have been expressed" by Milwaukee citizens after Jeffrey L. Dahmer confessed to killing at least 17 men since 1978.

'A sense of fear'

"First, people in the church have expressed a sense of fear that it might happen again," said Mr. Ott. "Then, a sense of anger and blame has been going in many directions concerning who is at fault for the murders.

"We are relating to that fear and anger from a faith perspective. When we stand together, we can lessen that fear.

"We also tell people that blame is not constructive in this situation. People have to understand that life needs to be put back together again."

Mr. Ott told the Reporter that a prayer vigil was held at Central United Methodist Church in downtown Milwaukee, located three blocks from the apartment where the slayings are believed to have taken place.

Citizens outraged

Central UMC members also participated in a number of gatherings focused on how Milwaukee residents should relate to the city's police department.

Milwaukee citizens have been outraged by reports that police had clues to the murders some months ago and failed to follow through with an investigation.

Just a few miles away from Central Church, the staff of the United Methodist-related Northcott Community Center have organized special support groups to help parents get through the shock of the deaths.

Joseph M. Winston, executive director of the center, said the deaths "hit home" for Shirley Hughes, past president of his parents' advisory committee. Mrs. Hughes' son, Anthony, was among the murder victims.

Protection discussed

In ministering to the needs of the neighborhood following the murders, the parents also discuss ways to help protect their children from being victims of crime.

"We tell the parents to teach their children never to go anywhere with any adult without family permission," said Mr. Winston.

"Because of the economics of our time, many of our young people are lured away by strangers [who offer them money] because their families need the money."

Named for a former episcopal leader of the Wisconsin Annual Conference, Bishop Clifford Northcott, the community center also has a satellite location just blocks from the alleged site of the murders.

The center is owned by the General Board of Global Ministries, and receives funding from the National Division, Wisconsin conference, and United Way.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

NEW EXECUTIVE: **Darrell L. Bryant**, an assistant in the Reporter's Conference Editions Department since 1985, has been named to head that department. The department coordinates newspaper production for 35 of the church's 72 annual conferences and dozens of publications for other denominations, including official national newspapers for both the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Mr. Bryant holds the bachelor of science degree in communication from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. He succeeds **Don Small**, who has headed the department since 1980. Mr. Small has been named a field staff consultant for United Methodist Communications in the church's Western Jurisdiction, effective Sept. 15. He will be based in Phoenix. "We are grateful for Don's creative leadership for more than a decade and wish him well in his new responsibilities," said Reporter editor and Chief Executive, the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III. "At the same time, we are pleased to have an experienced person like Darrell who can move immediately into this important leadership role in the Reporter organization.

Darrell Bryant

HELP IN BANGLADESH: United Methodist personnel and money are behind ecumenical efforts to build cyclone shelters and tube wells and repair fishing boats in Bangladesh. An April 29 cyclone there claimed more than 1,000 lives and displaced millions of people. The total effort will cost about $2 million, according to **Lonnie Turnipseed**, a United Methodist who directs the Southern Asia office for Church World Service, relief arm of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. CWS has raised $330,000. Immediately after the cyclone struck, UMCOR released $100,000 for Bangladesh relief and sent its former chief executive, **Norma Kehrberg**, to assess the situation. The UMCOR Emergency Advance Number for Bangladesh is 202-400-6.

WOMEN'S PRESIDENT: **Edith Loane** of Ireland was elected 1991-95 World Federation of Methodist Women's president during the group's eighth assembly July 15-22 in Singapore. She succeeds **Edith W. Ming** of New Orleans. **Emmy Lou John**, a United Methodist from Aurora, Ill., was elected world vice president after completing a term as treasurer. The assembly, which drew a record 600 registrants, was held in conjunction with the 16th World Methodist Conference (see related stories on other pages in this issue).

Compiled from news and staff reports.

Five additional 'saving stations' planned in drug/violence fight

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

WASHINGTON—From five "saving stations" in 1990 to eight in 1991 with five more on the way. . . .

That's a quick tally on expansion of the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative on Drugs and Violence.

Bishop Felton May, who leads the initiative, recently gave that report to the annual gathering of Good News, the unofficial evangelical caucus of United Methodists.

Sometimes held in tents

Although each local effort is different, "saving stations" are sometimes held in tents erected near a church in an area known for drug abuse and violence.

For a short period, usually two weeks, volunteers present worship activities and a variety of programs focusing on the prevention of drug abuse. Some programs also offer professional help for drug abusers.

The locations are called "saving stations" because of a young man who was murdered on the steps of a United Methodist church in a drug-infested neighborhood of Washington.

If the church doors had been opened, the young man could have been saved, Bishop May said.

The first "saving stations" opened last summer in five neighborhoods near the nation's capitol.

This summer, two of the Washington sites are continuing and expanding. Additional sites are in Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Atlantic City, Harrisburg and York, Pa.

Five more are proposed for Wilmington, Del.; Chester, Pa.; Erie, Pa.; Buffalo, N.Y.; and Cleveland, Ohio.

In addition to the "saving station" approach, numerous United Methodist local churches nationwide are sponsoring some type of drug abuse prevention programs, he said.

Things fell into place

"Only through the movement of the Holy Spirit could this have happened," Bishop May said. "Some things fell into place far beyond our ability to strategize. We were gifted by God to have done what we have done."

In a subsequent interview with the Reporter, Bishop May said, "The good news is that people from all over the country are inquiring about the program. The bad news is that the requests for help far exceed our ability to respond.

"We depend solely on monies from the United Methodist Advance for Christ and His Church," he continued. Although $100,000 was budgeted for the project, Advance No. 94730, only $17,500 have been received.

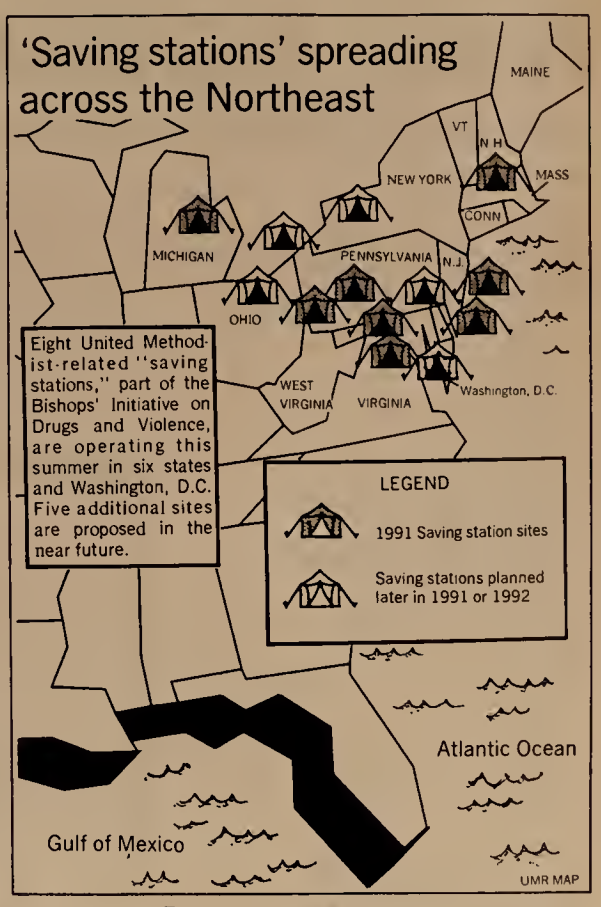
No other churchwide board or agency is in a financial position to help, the bishop said.

Hard core users targeted

Unique among this summer's programs—because it targets hard core drug users—is the project in York, Pa., Aug. 11-25. The multi-cultural, multi-lingual, interfaith event will take place in a tent in the city's toughest area.

An attempt will be made to draw the hard core users into the tent "as a beginning of the healing process and getting their lives together," Steve Drachler, who assists Bishop May, told the Reporter.

Several churches—African-American, Hispanic and white—are collaborating with city and county officials plus hospital and drug treatment center professionals, he said.



Minister returns to her people's Carolina homeland

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—The Rev. Lois Neal stood transfixed, looking at the green, misty mountains ringing Lake Junaluska in North Carolina.

The United Methodist pastor had heard of the beauty of these mountains all of her life, she said. They are the homeland of her people, the Cherokee.

"Now I know why they are called Smokey Mountains," she told the Reporter, indicating the mists and whisps of cloud that drifted across the valleys and veiled the trees.

Ms. Neal, the pastor of Angie Smith Memorial United Methodist Church in Anadarko, Okla., was attending a meeting of the United Methodist Worship Book Committee, of which she is a member.

This meeting was the first opportunity Ms. Neal had to spend some time in the land of her ancesters.

"Oh!" she said, joy radiating from her face, "who would have thought I would spend my 60th birthday right here. . .!"

Forced exodus

Ms. Neal was born in Oklahoma, like many of the Western Cherokee. Their birthplace was a result of one of the most tragic events in the history of the United States—the forced exodus of the Cherokee Indians from several eastern states.

Ms. Neal is the great, great granddaughter of Minerva Ross Kingfisher, one of 17,000 Cherokee forced from their homes in 1838 by the U.S. government. A small group of Cherokees escaped the exile by hiding in the mountains with the help of their white neighbors. This remnant became known as the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.

With the majority of her people, Minerva Kingfisher made the deadly 1,200-mile trek from North Carolina to Oklahoma now known as the "Trail of Tears." More than 4,000 Cherokees died on the trail.

When Minerva Kingfisher reached the end of the trail in Tahlequah, her health was broken and she died a couple of years later, Ms. Neal said.

Nevertheless, she passed on to her descendants the dream of returning to the Smokey Mountains.

It was a dream common to many of those who walked the "Trail of Tears," including Chief Junaluska, for whom Lake Junaluska is named.

Mr. Junaluska was the Cherokee hero of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend where he was credited with saving the life of Andrew Jackson. Cherokee historians note that Mr. Junaluska lived to regret that act when Mr. Jackson, then president of the United States, supported removing the Indians after gold was discovered on Cherokee land.

Mr. Junaluska returned to North Carolina when he was nearly 70 years old, walking all the way.

Felt called to ministry

But most, like Lois Neal's forebears, never returned. Ms. Neal grew up in Oklahoma. She married a United Methodist pastor and raised seven children.

When she was a 48-year-old widow, she felt called to ministry.

"I had never had a day of college," she said.

Nevertheless, she entered United Methodist-related Oklahoma City University and later got her master of divinity degree from United Methodist-related St. Paul Theological Seminary in Kansas City.

Now she serves her Cherokee people as pastor.

Lois Neal

Caucus claims more political clout

Reporter Staff Special

WASHINGTON—Some 350 participants in the recent national convocation of Good News heard that they can expect increased political clout in the church's 1992 General Conference.

"We are going to have more clear and distinct evangelical delegates to General Conference than in recent memory," the Rev. Paul Morell told the group, referring to the recent election of annual conference delegates to the church's top legislative body.

Mr. Morell also said that the financial problems that had plagued the organization a year earlier have been resolved by the sale of its publishing arm, Bristol Books.

In other actions, the Good News board of directors:

■ Commended the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. for "affirming biblical authority and the traditional scriptural standards on human sexuality" by its rejection in June of a controversial paper that sanctioned homosexual relationships.

■ Urged United Methodists to continue to oppose any acceptance of homosexual practice or acceptance of change in United Methodist Social Principles on the issue of homosexuality.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR/Youth Ministry, Community United Methodist Church, Virginia Beach. Full-time, salary negotiable. Send resume to above church, 1072 Old Kempsville Rd., Virginia Beach, VA, 23464. ATTN: Rev. Walt Whitehurst.

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Japan-tied school loses president

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

The controversial president of Teikyo-Westmar University in Le Mars, Iowa, (formerly United Methodist-related Westmar College) resigned in a surprise announcement July 20.

The Rev. Arthur W. Richardson was president when, in March 1990, Westmar trustees voted to make the school an arm of Teikyo University of Japan—reportedly at Dr. Richardson's recommendation.

The action, sparking national controversy and criticism, dissolved the 37-member board of trustees and placed the school and its properties under the complete legal control of Shoichi Okinaga, a Japanese physician and businessman, in return for a reported $4.15 million "gift" to the Iowa school.

Subsequently, the denomination's University Senate dissolved all ties with the school, citing a lack of representational government required for church affiliation.

Dr. Richardson, a ministerial member of United Methodism's Iowa conference, reportedly said he hopes to land another position in higher education, perhaps another college presidency.

Older-adult section sought in agency

United Methodist News Service

SAN DIEGO, Calif.—The United Methodist Advisory/Coordinating Committee for Older Adult Ministries recently put finishing touches on proposed legislation for the 1992 General Conference which calls for an older adult work area in the church's General Board of Discipleship.

The committee also proposed a four-year budget, created an 18-point list of concerns for any successor group, and appointed representatives to the General Conference.

The committee was formed in 1988 by the General Conference, the lawmaking body of the United Methodist Church, to study older adult ministries for the denomination.

The Rev. Elbert Cole, associated with the Congregation Resource Center in Kansas City, told the committee he believes that ignoring the skills and needs of older adults in the church is harmful to everyone.

"Our world," he said, "needs to call us of gray hair and put faith to work."

To illustrate his point, referring to his personal experience since retirement after 46 years of varied ministry, Mr. Cole said he had not been called on by anyone in the United Methodist Church to share his pastoral expertise.

Reports to the committee were given by Richard Gentzler, Board of Discipleship staff member for older adult ministries, and Elfriede Beisiegel, Sinsheim, Germany, who described older adult ministries in his homeland.

United Methodist Bishop Ernest A. Fitzgerald (Atlanta Area), told committee members their work has had an "immense impact on the church."

The committee expressed appreciation to the denomination's General Council on Ministries for its eight-year coordination of older adult ministries.

Council staff member Trudie Preciphs, Dayton, Ohio, said the committee was able to celebrate many achievements since 1982 when churchwide coordination of older adult ministries was first proposed.

Among the accomplishments cited were coordination and expansion of adult ministries throughout the denomination, two national convocations, new resources, research, and appointment of coordinators of older adult ministries in most annual conferences.

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Berlin choice divides Christians

Catholics and Protestants divided over unified Germany's capital

By WILLIAM E. DOWNEY
Religious News Service

BERLIN—The selection of this city as the capital of united Germany has touched off a debate between Protestants and Catholics.

Bonn, the previous capital of West Germany, is predominantly Catholic while Berlin's Christian population is mostly Protestant and Christians as a whole are a minority in the city.

Further upsetting Catholic leaders is the fact that the united Bundestag, the lower and more powerful house of the united German parliament, now has a Protestant majority, while the West German Bundestags had a Roman Catholic majority.

Cardinal Joachim Meisner of Cologne, a former bishop of both Bonn and Berlin, has expressed concern that what he called the "non-Christian environment of Berlin" will influence the style of the new government.

In an interview in a recent issue of his archdiocesan newspaper, Cardinal Meisner said that in Bonn, 80 percent of the population is Christian "in its orientation" and 20 percent non-Christian, while the situation is just the opposite in Berlin.

"The atmosphere determines the preparation of decisions, so that the Christian influence (in the government) will decline to a marked extent," the cardinal said. "We Catholics don't associate with Berlin the best of experiences."

The new arrangement could have implications for the country's position on abortion, an issue on which Protestants are more liberal than Catholics. A new law. for united Germany must be passed in the next two years.

Remarks generate protest

Cardinal Meisner's remarks drew a strong protest from the weekly newspaper for the West Berlin part of the Evangelical Church of Berlin and Brandenburg, the Lutheran-Reformed union to which 95 percent of West Berlin Protestants belong.

In an editorial, the "Berliner Sonntagsblatt" speculated that the cardinal's comment about Catholic associations with Berlin was a reference either to the Hitler times or to the so-called "cultural struggle" between the Prussian leadership of Berlin under Otto von Bismarck and the Catholic leadership in Prussia a century ago.

Memories of Hitler

With regard to the Hitler times, the editorial asked, "Haven't we Protestants the same memories? Who doesn't think first in this regard of the names of the opponents of National Socialism, ministers and lay persons, who emerged from the Protestant Church?"

The Sonntagsblatt added that the "cultural struggle" of Bismarck's day was a historical development that represented the changing relationship between church and state in all of Prussia and was not unique to Berlin.

"The Contemporary Christian," a Roman Catholic weekly, has suggested that the meager Christian presence in Berlin could be compensated for by building a large ecumenical church center at the heart of the city.

It suggested that the center be built around a church dedicated to St. Michael, the patron saint of Germany.

This suggestion has met with a favorable response from the "Deutsches Algemeines Sonntagsblatt," a weekly heavily subsidized by the Evangelical Church in Germany, the umbrella organization of most German Protestant churches.

"The Catholic and Protestant churches should willingly, indeed joyously, accept the challenge a city like Berlin presents," the Protestant editorial said.

"Their experience here can be fruitfully used elsewhere, because sooner or later the church will have to face secularism and other religions even in 'holy' Cologne and Bonn."

One indication of the secularism of Berlin is the fact that both Protestant and Catholic parishes in the western section of the city have the poorest level of church attendance for any city in what was West Germany.

And in the eastern section of the city, only one person in six belongs to either a Catholic or a Protestant church.

In the city as a whole, somewhat less than half of the 3.4 million residents belong to an organized religious institution. The city has almost 300 churches.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

Ready to go onstage

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—A young "Galilean" pulls off his tennis shoes to appear in the new musical children's "Through the Roof." The musical premiered at the recent gathering of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts at Lake Junaluska. The 20-minute musical, appropriate for a chancel setting and an expandable cast of children, is available through Cokesbury outlets.

Review

'Crazy' presents a voyage of self-discovery

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

We seem to be in for a spate of movies in which successful people re-examine their lives and discover who they really are and what really matters.

Christians may find themselves applauding this trend, since our faith values some things more highly than wealth or conformity.

"Crazy from the Heart," a funny, wise, made-for-television romantic comedy, sets such a voyage of self-discovery not in the usual metropolis or posh suburb but in a small town in Texas.

Charlotte Bain (played by Christine Lahti) is a high-school principal who is entirely upstanding, respectable and predictable. She has been content for years with her career and her noncommittal boyfriend, Coach Dewey Whitcomb (William Russ), but she is soul-dead inside.

Biological clock running

The news that a childhood friend is about to become a grandmother reminds Charlotte that her own "biological clock" is running out of time. She impulsively proposes to Dewey, who turns her down.

When the new school custodian asks Charlotte out on a date, she accepts—in order to goad Dewey. Much to her surprise, she has a wonderful time with Ernesto—and falls in love.

The shock and scandal this causes—and the difficulty of loving each other in spite of all this—are wittily captured in the dialogue written by Linda Voorhees.

Film is no fairy tale

Hers is no fairy tale in which romance between royalty and peasant enchants the entire realm. Ms. Voorhees reminds us that love and freedom both come at a price.

Christine Lahti, who so powerfully portrayed a working woman's descent into homelessness in "No Place Like Home," makes Charlotte Bain's changes entirely credible.

Ruben Blades, who was so good as the sheriff in Robert Redford's "The Milagro Beanfield War," turns in a good performance as the farmer who works as a janitor to save his farm.

Tommy Muniz is delightful as Ernesto's father, who burns down tobacco and liquor billboards "because they diminish us."

The movie's one weakness is Arthur Rubinstein's music. The producers should have turned instead to Ruben Blades, who is an accomplished musician and songwriter as well as a fine actor.

Residents of small towns in Texas may take exception to what the characters in "Crazy from the Heart" have to say about their prejudices.

But before they get too riled up they might note that the film also presumes that in such a community the daughter of a Mexican farmer can become a lawyer, that the local judge could be a black woman and that a middle-class Anglo woman just might run off with a Hispanic janitor.

All the major characters in "Crazy from the Heart" undergo personal transformation. It affirms the courage it takes to be true to your own standards rather than being controlled by the biases of your neighbors.

And it celebrates the values which Ernesto's family passes along from generation to generation: loyalty, integrity, honesty and respect for yourself and others.

"Crazy from the Heart" can be seen on Turner Network Television (TNT) cable service at 8 p.m. ET Aug. 19 with repeat broadcasts through Aug. 30.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

TURNER PICTURES PHOTO BY DANNY FELD

Left, Tommy Muniz and Ruben Blades play father and son in the TNT movie "Crazy from the Heart" at 8 p.m. ET Aug. 19. At right, Christine Lahti stars as an Anglo high school principal in a small Texas town who falls in love with the Hispanic janitor, played by Mr. Blades.

Dear Deborah

Why should Ruthann forgive this bum?

Dear Deborah:

This is in regards to your answer to Ruthann whose minister husband ran off with another woman after 29 years of marriage and left her with 6 children to support.

Why the forgiveness?

That bum should be put in jail if he refuses to support the kids he made. (He'll probably make six more to the other woman.) He should be taken off the minister's list immediately (he's a disgrace to the good ones).

He is NOT a minister but a stumbling block to people in the church. No wonder attendance in churches seems to be dropping. He's one example. The sooner Ruthann takes action the better.

If you are an HONEST CHRISTIAN, you will print this letter AS IS in your column. I will be looking for it.

A Christian with common sense

Dear Reader:

Here is your letter. Ruthann and all Christians should forgive because God asks us to. It also happens to be good for us.

Holding a grudge makes us bitter and unhappy and really does nothing to affect the other person. Ruthann will not really be able to get on with her life until she forgives him.

But to forgive does not mean to condone or to reward unacceptable behavior. She certainly needs an attorney and a lot of prayer to move ahead and make a new life for herself and her children without him.

In the church we, too, need to learn how to forgive but not condone unacceptable behavior in our ministers.

This is an issue most denominations are finally beginning to address, but local congregations seem to be less willing to face up to it.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Young man's testimony led to 'Trust and Obey'

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of his Word
What a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

In the mid-1880s the evangelist D.L. Moody was conducting a series of meetings in Brockton, Mass.

Leading the music was Daniel B. Towner, who, after 15 years as a church music director in Methodist churches, became a music evangelist.

In one service a young man spoke up in a testimony service saying, "I am not quite sure—but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey."

Impressed by the honesty and forthrightness of the young man's statement, Towner wrote it on a piece of paper and put it into his pocket.

Later, Towner related the incident in a letter to a Presbyterian minister friend, John H. Sammis.

When Sammis read the letter, he wrote the following lines:

Trust and obey,
For there is no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.

This was the refrain. Next Sammis wrote the stanzas.

Towner received the completed text from Sammis and soon composed the music that we sing with these words.

In a collection of hymns he published in Chicago in 1887, Towner included the hymn.

From 1893 until his death in 1919, Towner was head of the music department at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, where he trained evangelical church musicians and evangelistic singers.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"I Know Not What the Future Hath"

New book helps make up for lost centuries of women's writings about Christian faith

By GORDON LEGGE
Religious News Service

CALGARY, Alberta—A few years back, a British nun stood in a library scanning the index of a contemporary, well-received history of Christianity. Her heart sank. Not one listing of a woman in over a thousand years?

"The index of people and places contained not so much as a single reference to women," said Sister Lavinia Byrne.

The 43-year-old recently spoke to the Faithful Companions of Jesus, a religious order of women whose members came from across Canada for a homecoming at their retreat center.

"The only reference under the letter 'w' was to wealth," said Sister Byrne, a co-editor of "The Way" magazine, a noted Catholic journal on theology and spirituality.

The experience in the library gave birth to a book, "The Hidden Tradition," a collection of writings by women, soon to be published by Crossroads.

Edited by Sister Byrne, the writings cover a range of topics spirituality, theology and the life of the church which demonstrate the rich contribution women have made to the Christian tradition.

Women have written of God

"Women have been writing authoritatively about their experience of God and organized religion for centuries," said Sister Byrne.

She hopes her book will demonstrate the vitality of the hidden tradition and help contemporary women and men in their search for God.

Sister Byrne included well known women and those less famous in the book.

British novelist and playwright Dorothy Sayers, for instance, writes that women are first at the cradle and last at the cross.

Mary Ward, the founder of Sister Byrne's religious order, is quoted in the book as predicting a time when women would play a far greater role in the church.

Women's rights and issues are most recognized where Christianity has been a way of life, Sister Byrne said. She is the associate director of a committee set up by the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland to study the roles of women and men in the church.

Feminism is not the trendy fad some theologians make it out to be, she said.

"There have been many occasions when tears have streamed down my face listening to theological turkey-cocks go gobble, gobble."

The concerns of women are not a threat but a sign of growth for the Christian churches, said Sister Byrne. And, she said, women's aspirations should not be collapsed into the single question of ordination, a particular focus of Catholic women.

Alternate agenda is offered

"Let's not put all our energy into that," Sister Byrne said, citing an agenda of social concerns, such as family life, the care of children, education and career, and others being addressed in the secular sector, as churches lag behind.

It is admittedly difficult for male hierarchies to relinquish power and prestige, she acknowledged.

"Do women exist for the service of the church as a cheap labor force or for service in the church as living members?" she asked.

PHOTO BY KATHERINE NOACK

Singing for racial harmony

BROOKLYN, N.Y.—A Korean musical group sings for the annual picnic of the Nam San Korean Church and the Bay Ridge United Methodist Church. This year the picnic was combined with a meeting of Bay Ridge Neighbors for Racial Harmony, a group that formed after the Bensonhurst murder of 1989.

The Uniting Campus Ministries in Louisiana

Things Are Happening With Louisiana Campus Ministries

Jambalay' Crawfish Pie File Gumbo

'Overcoming Homogeneity'

NCMA 1991 Conference

Dillard University New Orleans, La.

June 28 - July 2

Participants of the National Campus Ministries Association Conference.

Be a Partner in Campus Ministry With:

* Grambling State University
  United Campus Ministry
  Rev. Quinton J. Gibson
  P.O. Box 81
  Grambling, LA 71245
  (318) 274-2354

* Louisiana Tech University
  Wesley Foundation
  Rev. Andrew R. Hurst
  Tech Station, Box 3005
  Ruston, LA 71272
  (318) 255-3112

* Louisiana State University
  Baton Rouge
  Uniting Campus Ministry
  Rev. Randy Nichols
  333 E. Chimes St.
  Baton Rouge, LA 70802
  (504) 344-7695

* McNeese State University
  Wesley Foundation
  Rev. Wayne Taylor
  501 E. Sale
  Lake Charles, LA 70605
  (318) 477-2191

* Northeast University
  Campus Ministry
  Rev. Jim Wilson
  112 Delano Dr.
  Monroe, LA 71203
  (318) 343-2944

* Northwestern University
  Wesley Foundation
  Rev. Ryan Horton, Jr.
  P.O. Box 4285
  Natchitoches, LA 71457
  (318) 352-2888

* Southeastern Louisiana University
  Presbyterian/Methodist Campus Ministry
  Rev. Gene Finnell
  903 W. Colorado
  Hammond, LA 70401
  (504) 345-6175

* Southern University
  Wesley Foundation
  Rev. McKinley Franklin
  P.O. Box 11458
  Baton Rouge, LA 70813
  (504) 778-0076

* Tulane University
  United Methodist Center
  Rev. John Higginbotham, Jr.
  7102 Freret
  New Orleans, LA 70118
  (504) 866-8681

* University of New Orleans
  Southern University of Law
  Orleans and Delgado Jr. College
  Wesley Campus Ministry
  Rev. Dale Branch
  4128 Franklin Ave.
  New Orleans, LA 70122
  (504) 288-7880

* University of Southwestern Louisiana
  Wesley United Campus Ministry
  Rev. Don Ross
  238 General Gardner
  Lafayette, LA 70501
  (318) 235-6073

And With These United Methodist-Related Colleges

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  Shreveport, LA 71134
  (318) 869-5281

* Dillard University
  Dr. Isaac Bivins, Chaplain
  2601 Gentilly Blvd.
  New Orleans, LA 70122
  (504) 283-8822

Louisiana Hosts National Campus Ministry Association Conference

Dillard University was the site of the 1991 National Campus Ministry Association Conference June 28-July 2. NCMA is one of the largest professional associations for campus ministers in the country with over 400 members. About 100 of those members were in attendance at this year's conference. A local planning team consisting of the Louisiana Annual Conference campus ministers planned and executed the event for the NCMA Executive Committee.

NCMA asked the planning committee to use the resources of New Orleans and the area to help the group come to an understanding of how to better minister to the diverse student and faculty populations on our campuses. The Conference heard keynote addresses by Ms. Barbara Major of the People's Coalition for Survival and Beyond and Dr. Ernestine Montgomery, the director of the University of New Orleans Office of Career Placement and Cooperative Education. Other resource people were Dr. William Sutton, President of Mississippi Valley State University and Dr. Cain Hope Felder of the Howard University Divinity School. Dillard's Chaplain, Dr. Isaac Bivins, was worship leader.

Conference participants worshiped at a variety of New Orleans congregations on Sunday, heard administrators from Louisiana colleges and universities discuss ways to create community on campus, and were entertained by a New Orleans gospel choir, the First Revolution Singers.

Dr. William Sutton, President, Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, Mississippi, speaks to those attending the Conference at Dillard University.

Ms. Barbara Major, representing the People's Coalition for Survival and Beyond, makes a presentation during the Campus Ministries Conference.

Mr. Eric H. F. Law, Episcopal Chaplain, University of Southern California and Consultant on Multi-Cultural Ministry Training, speaks to group during the Conference.

More participants.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT . . .

IDEAS . . .

RESOURCES . . .

for Ministry with Students

Here are eleven ideas to get you started. Have you thought of . . .

- sending the name and school address of each college student to the campus minister or University Chaplain at those campuses.
- sending "care packages" (cookies, stationery, peanut butter, snack food, letters from church members, etc.) to students away at college.
- identifying students with specific career interests and matching them with church members involved in that career field.
- identifying men and women who travel on business and students away at college in order for the business person to take them out to dinner if their travel brings them to that college community.
- arranging, as a Pastor, to visit students away at college and spending the day with them — going to class, seeing the campus, visiting the dorm, going out to lunch, etc.
- sending *Orientation Magazine* to students going to college*.
- inviting college students to meet with your senior high youth fellowship group and discussing what it is like to live on campus.
- inviting international students to share a weekend or a holiday with members of the congregation.
- inviting a faculty member or administrator of a nearby college to speak at a congregational meal on "Values and College Students" or "What's new in my Discipline" or "The Role of Values in Education."
- inviting students to do a panel discussion of "what students are thinking about today" for your women's or men's fellowship.
- asking a campus minister to visit your congregation and bring some students to talk about "Campus Ministry and Students Today."

Campus Ministry Highlights

Rev. McKinley Franklin, newly appointed campus minister at Southern-BR, attended the national "New Campus Minister's Training" at Rosary College in Riverview, Ill. New Campus Minister's training, an ecumenical event, is co-sponsored by the Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church. Dr. Don Shockley, Assistant General Secretary of the Board was one of the leaders.

In May eleven Wesley United Campus Ministry Students from the University of Southwestern Louisiana spent a week in Americus, Ga. working with Habitat for Humanity. In addition to their manual labor, students raised $1000 for the project.

The Louisiana Tech Wesley Foundation welcomed a new campus minister in June, the Rev. Andy Hurst. Andy already has a full schedule of programs planned for Tech students including Sunday Night Alive, Tuesday's: Lunch and Last Lecture, Hardcore Bible Study, and special retreats, concerts, and much more.

Grambling's ecumenical campus ministry now has a United Methodist as its campus minister. Quinton Gibson comes to Grambling from Texas. Rev. Gibson attended the NCMA conference in New Orleans and met campus ministry colleagues from Louisiana.

UM Student Loan

The United Methodist Student Loan is available to students at state universities, as well as Methodist supported schools. Scholarships are available through Nashville.

If you are interested in learning more about the loan or scholarships, contact the campus ministry at the desired school for applications and assistance. Undergraduates may borrow $900 for a calendar year. Larger amounts are available for graduate students.

Many Louisiana United Methodists have taken advantage of this low interest loan which is financed by United Methodist Student Day Offering. This year the special day will be celebrated November 24, 1991. United Methodists are asked to give generously to this offering.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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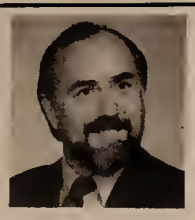
The Work of Higher Education and Campus Ministries



This week's column is written by the Reverend Donald K. McDowell, Chairperson of the Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries. Mr. McDowell is pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

The work of the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is broad and varied. It includes eleven Campus Ministries, Dillard University and Centenary College, and a new university on the Continent of Africa. These ministries, supported through the Conference Apportionments, mean that each local congregation is active in ministry to college students.

Since I attended Louisiana Tech where I was active in the Wesley Foundation, things have changed on the campus of all colleges. The average age of the student body has risen since many people are returning to college seeking a career change. In many instances these are single parents.

The Campus Ministry is a vital link in preparing persons for future service in the church both as ordained clergy and active laity. One minister friend recently told me that it was through student participation in Wesley Foundation work that he learned what it was to be a church community. What is being done is vital to the whole life of the church. The Campus Minister is like a listening post, listening to the voices of those who will be in leadership in the future. The Campus Ministry can certainly inform the church about tomorrow's leaders, enabling the church as a whole to develop ministries and programs for the future.

One exciting new venture for our Board this year was the establishment of a relationship with the Presbyterian Church in North Louisiana. Out of this new relationship we are pleased to report a renewed effort at ministry in Grambling. In cooperation with the Ruston District, the Presbyterians, our own Board of Global Ministries and the 1000 Club, we have a full-time minister appointed to Grambling to revitalize our Campus Ministry there. In addition, we have entered into conversation with the Shreveport District in hopes of beginning something there. We have six institutions of Higher Education in Shreveport (not counting Centenary) with no Campus Ministry.

In addition to our fine institutions, Dillard and Centenary, we have joined the whole United Methodist Church in a wonderful venture to establish the first United Methodist university in Africa. Our own Amy Ward, who serves on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, reports that progress is going well. Not only are we contributing to this through the Conference Apportionments, but we make special contributions to scholarship programs, library books, etc. as well. The Christian faith is sweeping through Africa and there are simply not enough ministers to go around. The role of this university is a vital link to ministry in Africa.

Take a day and visit one of the Campus Ministry locations, or go to Centenary of Dillard and see what they are doing. Read about Africa's university and support it. There are some wonderful and exciting things happening in the field of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

Rev. Don McDowell

Communicators Fuel the Fire

Ms. Judi Sarver and the Reverend Timothy M. Smith of the Louisiana Annual Conference were among the more than 60 local church leaders from 26 annual conferences who attended the church communications workshop in July at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

"Communications Skill Building for the '90s" was co-sponsored by United Methodist Communications (UMCom) and Scarritt-Bennett Center. Workshops covered print and electronic media and were customized for both large and small churches.

"The challenge is there for the local church communicator to present positive images of the church to a society that is searching," said UMCom Director of Conference Services Mrs. Shirley Whipple Struchen. "We have so many good-news stories to tell for publicity, advertising, or public service announcements," she continued. "We're lucky — all we have to do is tell the story about what's already going on all across the Church. Good communication fuels the fire," said Mrs. Struchen.

Participants stated, "The skills and networking developed here aid our doing the vital job of communicating more effectively in our local church."

Leadership for the event was provided by communication professionals prominent in their field. Mr. Ervin Daily, field staff representative for UMCom, led the workshop on video production; Mr. Rod Hargo, field staff for UMCom, facilitated the internal communications workshop; Mr. Daniel Moore, producer with Good News TV in Macon, Georgia, led the workshop for radio; and Mrs. Struchen, UMCom staff, facilitated a group intensely involved in developing strategy for local church media campaigns.

Spanish communications sessions were led by UMCom staff person Ms. Letty LaFontaine, internal communications; and PR consultant Ms. Leah Helen Gallardo from the California-Pacific Conference, radio.

United Methodist Communications is one of the general agencies of the church and helps the Church tell its story to itself and to the world. The Scarritt-Bennett Center is a center for the education of the laity committed to the nurture of the human spirit.

Pictured are Ms. Judi Sarver and the Rev. Timothy Smith during a church communications workshop held at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

Laity Sunday October 20

The Holiness of Christian Living

As Christians we are connected with one another. Action in support of our faith connects us with other believers in our community, our denomination and our world. Connectionalism makes us participants in the preaching and the living of the gospel at times and in places where most of us could never have an individual presence.

On Sunday, October 20, 1991, we celebrate Laity Sunday in the United Methodist Church. We are called on this special day to manifest in our own lives the connection between faith and action. We are called to break down the barrier between Sunday morning's affirmation of faith and Monday morning's dose of reality. We are called to put our faith in motion: to put feet, wheels and wing on what we believe, and to send it out into a world that needs to know the hope of the gospel. For this reason, this year's theme for Laity Sunday is, "We Are Called to Holy Living."

The call to connect faith and action is an invitation to join the family of God, wherein members work together to achieve common goals arising from common beliefs. It is a call to make our deeds fit our affirmations in a mature pursuit of mental and physical health. It is, most of all, a call to be integrated, connected and one with God.

Clinical Pastoral Training

A basic course in Clinical Pastoral Training entitled "Clinical Counseling with the Emotionally Disturbed" will be offered at Central Louisiana State Hospital beginning Monday, August 19, 1991, according to Chaplain W. Carlton Vance, Director of the Clinical Pastoral Training Program. Students may earn two hours of Seminary credit with the completion of this course. Continuing education credit is also offered.

Carroll B. Freeman, Ed.D., Professor of Psychology and Counseling at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Seminary consultant on the Chaplaincy staff at Central, will lead some of the seminars. Participants will also be able to become involved in clinical work in the hospital and in other practical applications of the material taught.

Primary objectives of this course will be: (1) to provide the student the opportunity to observe and learn specialized counseling approaches to persons who may be emotionally disturbed; (2) to provide opportunity for gaining insight, including techniques and methods of interpersonal encounter so as to be effective in counseling deeply troubled people; (3) to gain a better understanding of the behavior of people and become more effective in helping people to live under spiritual and emotional distress; (4) to guide the student toward self-understanding, which involves an appreciation of his or her potential self, acceptance of his or her own limitations and the development of motivation toward personal adjustment and growth.

Interested persons may call (318-484-6357) or write to Chaplain W. Carlton Vance at Central Hospital, P.O. Box 5031, Pineville, LA 71361-5031.

Around the Conference

As a part of its on-going "UMW for Children" program, the United Methodist Women of Walmsley UMC in Morgan City, joins Literacy Collaboration sponsored by Children's Educational Enrichment Group, Iota Eta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and the Morgan City Public Library. Last year these groups held their second city-wide Morgan City public read-in. More than 200 parents, children and reading advocates gathered at M.D. Shannon Elementary School and read to each other then listened to folk tales read by Mrs. Dolores C. Henderson, president of both the UMW unit at Walmsley and of Iota Eta Omega. Mrs. Henderson, CEEG Director, coordinates this community effort for parent and child literacy awareness. The Rev. Dan Washington Jr. is pastor.

Upcoming Celebration

The Reverend Laurence E. Hall will be the guest speaker during the Annual Homecoming Celebration for Jordan UMC in Baton Rouge. The theme for the Sunday, August 18 event is, "Incorporated into a Brand New Family." Mr. Hall served as the pastor of United Methodist Churches in the Florida Annual Conference before moving to Baton Rouge upon his retirement. The special event will take place at 11:00 a.m. The Reverend Clarence L. Hillard is pastor of Jordan.

New Resources Available for Youth Ministry

A new resource designed to assist adults in their ministry with youth — **Youth Ministry and Evangelism: New Wine for a New Day** — has recently been published by Discipleship Resources, the program publishing arm of the General Board of Discipleship.

Just as the religious leaders in Jesus' day were challenged to be open to the Spirit through new forms of ministry and evangelism, so too are the church leaders of today. Old ideas — such as the idea that youth only want to have fun — are challenged in **Youth Ministry and Evangelism.**

Authors Shirley F. Clement and Tom Salsgiver, both staff members of the General Board of Discipleship, examine a number of misconceptions about youth ministry and show how ministries can be different through the "how-to" stories of several highly effective youth groups. The focus is on "relational" evangelism and ministry, where youth leaders share their own stories and the biblical story in new and creative ways that touch the full range of contemporary youth experience and culture.

Youth Ministry and Evangelism is designed for youth leaders and volunteer workers who are ready to hear and heed the challenge of "new wine."

Youth Ministry and Evangelism: New Wine for a New Day (order number DR094B) is available for $5.95 from Discipleship Resources, 1908 Grand Avenue, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202; telephone: 615-340-7284.

Centenary Invites Ministerial Fellowship Applications

The Ministerial Fellows program of Centenary College was established to offer diaconal and ordained ministers in the Louisiana Annual Conference the opportunity to use Centenary facilities and resources for ongoing study and research.

This experience is structured around the needs and interests of the minister and is offered at no expense to either the conference or the "Fellow." Housing, meals, campus and library privileges are all provided the Fellow for the time of residency at Centenary.

Selected Fellows are invited to spend two school weeks in residence on the Centenary campus. These are structured in one week sessions with resource assistance offered by designated members of Centenary's faculty. Two units of continuing education credit are offered for the experience.

There are two Ministerial Fellows selected each year. Those interested in applying or obtaining further information on this program, should contact:

Mr. Dick Anders
Director of Church Relations
Centenary College of Louisiana
Post Office Box 41188
Shreveport, LA 71134-1188
Telephone: 318-869-5108

This should be done no later than August 30, 1991.

Of Special Interest on the Inside Pages

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Letters to the Editor:
You failed in diagnosis of membership decline ..... Page 2
'When the Lord calls, what do you say?' ..... Page 3
Clergywomen tell stories of support and encouragement ..... Page 3
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'Theology & Addiction: A Tapestry of Mission in Action' A National Leadership Training Seminar for Pastors and Laity

The Health and Welfare Ministries Program Department of the General Board of Global Ministries, the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, the Commission on Interprofessional Education and Practice of the Ohio State University, and Glide Memorial United Methodist Church are co-sponsoring a national skills development seminar on September 26-27, 1991.

The seminar will be held on the campus of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, for local church pastors and laity. A team consisting of a pastor and a lay person or a team of two lay persons may represent a local church. A total of 200 persons will be registered.

Continuing Education Credits will be granted through the Methodist Theological School for clergy, and Counselor Education Credits for laity from the Ohio State University Commission on Interprofessional Education and Practice.

The purpose of the seminar is twofold:

[] To enable pastors and laity to see and address substance abuse as a public health issue, using an interdisciplinary approach to ministry and mission.

[] To provide training for pastors and laity to develop/enlarge their skills in substance abuse ministries.

Some of the topics in the seminar include:

* Theology & Addiction," "Sin, Gender & Addiction," "Public Health Issues: Drugs & AIDS/HIV Virus," "Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice," "Cultural Values that Prevent Drug Abuse," "Managing Stress & the Demands of Mission," and "Monies for Mission."

Nationally recognized speakers for this event include: Reverend Cecil Williams, minister of liberation at Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, who has given expert testimony to the United States House of Representatives Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control; Dr. Linda Mercadante, Associate Professor of Theology at the Methodist Theological School; Dr. Vergel Lattimore, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care in the L.A. Beeghly Chair in Pastoral Care & Director of the Master of Arts in Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Ministry Program at the Methodist Theological School; David Smith, M.D., Director of Haight Asbury Free Medical Clinics and international specialist in addictive medicine; and Jeptha Hostetler, Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine & Psychiatry, Ohio State University.

Participants will be given "how to do it" skills that will enable them to implement ministries when they return to their local churches. Resource materials and models of effective community-based ministries will be shared that are culturally diverse and relevant to rural and urban settings.

Registration is $100 and includes materials and meals for two days. Deadline for registration is September 20, 1991. Travel and lodging costs are in addition to the registration fee.

Persons who are interested in attending the seminar should contact:

Dr. Vergel Lattimore
Methodist Theological School in Ohio
614-363-1146
or
Judy Hunt
Health & Welfare Ministries, GBGM
212-870-3910

REGISTRATION FORM
"Theology & Addiction" Seminar,
September 26-27, 1991
(Please reply no later than September 20, 1991)

Full Registration includes seminar sessions, meals and resource materials. Registration Fee is $100.00 per person.

Continuing Education Credits:
(please check one) [] Clergy [] Counseling [] Social Work

Special Needs: [] Visual [] Hearing [] Physical (Please Explain)
_____

Name: _____ Local Church _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____ Telephone: (____)_____

Make Checks payable to: H & W Theology & Addiction Seminar, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 350, New York, New York 10115.

FaithLine

Readers applaud clapping during worship as praise to God

Don't hold your applause in church.

That was the opinion of an overwhelming majority of more than 260 readers who responded by telephone, facsimile and mail to the Reporter's Aug. 2 "FaithLine."

The inquiry asked readers' opinions on a recent statement by United Methodist Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area) that applause during worship "turns the church into a theater."

Those who disagreed with the bishop's statement frequently cited Psalms 47:1: "Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy (NRSV)."

Those who agreed with the bishop's statement most often said they believe applause breaks the contemplative mood of worship and shifts the focus away from God.

Here's a sampling of readers' comments:

Dr. Stuart C. Greene, Marietta, Ga.: Wake up, United Methodists! If something as simple as clapping can create energy within a service of worship, what is the harm? Bishop Grove says, "It turns the church into a theater." I say, "Better to be a theater than a funeral parlor!"

The Rev. Jane Stippert Wyatt, Freeport, Ill.: I do not believe the Holy Spirit tells us to shut up and sit down during worship, but to stand up and shout praises to the Lord. As a "baby boomer" who is in church, let me assure you that telling my generation to shut up is what drove us away from church in the first place.

Drusilla Vaughn, Branson, Mo.: I don't feel that applause is any less appropriate or any more appropriate than tears or laughter and the emotions that go along with them. If you're moved by something that's connected with something as substantial to you as your faith, then why should you not applaud?

Helen Weaver, Atascadero, Calif.: I have had several beautiful solos just ruined because applause takes away from the feeling of spirituality when applause follows something that is deeply moving.

Bill Burney, Rutland, Vt.: Many church services have indeed become theaters to attract an entertainment-seeking society, but not because of applause. Applause in the midst of devotional worship can be a real affirmation of God's presence.

The Rev. Mark Woodward, Preston, Minn.: What The United Methodist Church needs are enthusiasm and expressions of joy. We've had so much of this dead stuff that no wonder things are slipping.

The Rev. Buddy Miller, Houston, Texas: The church is not a mausoleum. It's a place where people are alive and well and praising God for his goodness. If church is a celebration, why not celebrate?

The Rev. Jack Newsome, Mattoon, Ill.: The act of applauding is an unmistakable clue that people see themselves not as participants but as spectators in the act of worship.

Paul Dickerson, Ashland City, Tenn.: Of course I believe in applause in church. Most United Methodists I know are warm and giving people and to not applaud in some cases would seem stilted and even selfish. The service of worship is celebrated on both sides of the chancel rail.

Rhea Vakich, Garden Grove, Calif.: It seems that in order for the worship service to be sort of a dialogue with those ministering we need some way to respond to the things that inspire us or cause certain feelings to well up in us. So, I would propose that we applaud in sign language, if sound is abrasive.

Earl Shuneman, Ontario, Calif.: I believe that applause during worship goes along with the hype of a ball field. I find it offensive.

David Ruth, Lebanon County, Pa.: I heartily approve of applause in the sanctuary, when used judiciously. I think it's good to praise people to let them know they're doing a commendable job. I also think it gives you much more of a participating feeling than sitting there like a stone statue.

The Rev. Paul Vandegriff, Cincinatti, Ohiu: I have had some of the same feelings expressed by Bishop Grove about the inappropriateness of applause during worship services. However, I recognize that applause was considered an appropriate expression of thanksgiving in Hebrew worship. In leading worship, I have made a practice of saying, "Oh let's give God a hand for that beautiful anthem" or "that inspiring witness" or "that report of your husband's sucessful surgery!" I think Bishop Grove has refocused our attention on the source of our blessings and the object of our gratitude.

The Rev. Barbara Riddle, Kissimme, Fla.: Clapping has been around longer than theatres. Both Isaiah and Psalms talk about clapping in conjunction with singing and joy. It is a natural, spontaneous response to worship. It happens in our congregation, not every Sunday, but happens and it is a joyful event.

Jimmy Mullett, Covington, La.: I believe that applauding in church is totally disrespectful. It should be discontinued in all churches, not just United Methodist churches. Applauding after a hymn is just as disrespectful as applauding after the national anthem.

Dorian Taylor, St. Louis, Mo.: If you want to congratulate the singer, or the instrumentalists, do so after the service. But don't make a show. They're standing up there giving their offering to God and there's no applause needed for that.

The Rev. P. J. Flowers, Dexter, N.M.: I approve of applause that is applause to the glory of God. If we are applauding ourselves, it's wrong in worship. We can't do enough to give God the glory and praise, and I include applause in that.

Joe Giles, Nashville, Tenn.: In April of this year I quit going to worship simply because of the ridiculous situation of applauding various acts of worship. It is totally inappropriate. It destroys meaningful moments for other worshippers, and is simply another symptom of the insanity of our society to require being entertained rather than thinking seriously about anything.

Rebecca Roth, Jacksonville, Texas: Applause is a warm outward sign of appreciation. Many people will applaud who would otherwise feel awkward saying "amen" or "hallelujah." Why not both? Must we have it only one way?

Martha Hicks, Murfreesboro, Tenn.: Music and worship is an offering of human talent given to God. Its purpose for the worshiping community is to glorify God, illuminate Scripture and provide another means by which the worshiper may encounter God. Applause for music detracts from God-centered worship and relegates the musician from one who made an offering to God and the congregation to one who performs for an audience and must be tangibly rewarded.

Steve Domke, Belmont, Mass.: I believe that applause that I have experienced during worship services is the result of a welling-up of faithful joy and praise. I believe this outward expression of inner joy is appropriate in worship, and assists in letting the Holy Spirit flow. As long as applause is not expected and does not become an empty habit, then I believe it is not only appropriate but wonderful.

Applause during worship can be an appropriate expression of praise, joy or thanksgiving to God, said a majority of readers responding to an Aug. 2 "FaithLine" poll.

The Rev. Russell Dilley, Humboldt, Iowa: The church is an arena where we praise God. It may be through singing, through the spoken word, through spoken prayers or through applause as the spontaneity or enthusiasm of the moment dictates.

The Rev. Bryant Wilson, Daphne, Ala.: I approve of applause in worship services, but only under certain conditions. It's very difficult for congregations to know just when that appropriate time is, and there have been times when they've done it when it was wrong and haven't when it wasn't. I don't know what the answer to that is.

Bonnie Grabenhofer, Elmhurst, Ill.: Some Sundays I feel like I'm attending the Emmys rather than worshipping our Lord. If we are to follow Christ's example of being a humble servant, then we should be giving glory to God for the gifts and talent that he has bestowed upon us and not asking for or expecting a round of applause.

Tony Adamcheck, Manchester, Conn.: In 2 Samuel, King David danced before the Lord. Would the Lord withhold applause because it was inappropriate? I believe that He dances and applauds with us.

Editorial

Singing the Lord's song

"East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."
—Rudyard Kipling

Mr. Kipling's words may have been true a century ago, but they no longer apply—especially to a world religious gathering!

The recent 16th World Methodist Conference in Singapore is a case in point. It provides an instructive example of how East meets West and North meets South these days (see UMR, Aug. 2, 9, and elsewhere in this issue).

The gathering, like world conclaves of other church bodies, offered participants a chance to interact with other Christians from cultures unlike their own. But it also proved to be a cross-cultural minefield of conflicts over decision-making, dialogue and public witness to religious liberty.

Painful as they are, such conflicts help to illustrate the hazards and opportunities of events which mingle people unfamiliar with one another's customs, thought and speech.

We believe, in fact, that such multicultural events, despite and partly because of their inherent pitfalls, cast a new light on the ancient biblical challenge to "sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalms 137:4 NRSV).

Specifically, how can Christians, whether "back home" or in international settings, unite to proclaim and live the faith that we share with sisters and brothers who don't think, speak, act—or sing—like us?

The experience of Methodists in Singapore, and earlier this year, of Christians worldwide who attended the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia, offers some clues:

■ Acknowledge that our shared identity as Christ's followers does not automatically dissolve differences rooted in disparate backgrounds and traditions. We often are strangers to each other—even when we live in the same town or country!

■ Create opportunities to learn about and celebrate our differences by experiencing each other's distinctive expressions of faith in worship and daily life. Often, the primary benefit of bringing together Christians of varied backgrounds and cultures is a deepened awareness that there are, in fact, myriad ways to follow Christ.

■ Be prepared to compromise or give up "our way" of doing things—conducting a meeting, making decisions, etc.—that doesn't involve a vital matter of belief or practice. Getting bogged down in comparatively trivial issues too often discredits our Christian witness and hinders us from effectively advancing the cause of Christ.

Above all, we need to remember the advice of St. Paul, who struggled throughout his life with the challenge of helping Christians "sing the Lord's song" despite their profound differences and divisions:

"If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. . . . Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way . . . ." (1 Corinthians 13:1, 4-5, NRSV).

Letters to the Editor

You failed in membership-decline diagnosis

Your editorial of July 26 touched on the symptoms of the declining United Methodist Church membership but failed completely in the diagnosis of the problem.

The church hierarchy, through its support of abortion, constant study of homosexuality, push for inclusive language, criticism of the United States, etc., has forced these thousands to seek a church home outside of The United Methodist Church.

No amount of promotion or membership plans will stop this exodus. There are many thousands of us who leave United Methodism unless it returns to the sound doctrines found in the Bible. These doctrines were given to us by the Lord. They were the only way in the past, they are the only way now, and they will still be the only way in the future. No amount of sociological double-talk or compromise can change their meaning.

Robert Cobb
Tulsa, Oklahoma

No place for dance

There is no place in the Book of Worship that is suitable for the pagan Cherokee Indian Green Corn dance, with or without tobacco. The same applies to the Hawaiian hula, Middle East belly dance or any other dance that comes to mind (see UMR, July 26).

Elwood Derr
Irving, Texas

Forget it

I read the July 19 "Here I Stand" article by Eleanor Finkbeiner and felt that I must reply.

A few months ago I ran across an article that caught my attention. The article, dated 1970, stated that the United Methodist hierarchy had appointed a study committee to see if some or many of the agencies could be eliminated or combined.

Just a few months ago, I read an article where our church hierarchy had appointed a committee to study our many agencies to see if some of them could be eliminated or combined.

If we are going to take 30 years to find a more efficient way to manage a church, forget it. Our beloved church will be destroyed before then.

John W. Dalton
St. Louis, Missouri

What others are saying

"Whenever I'm in trouble I pray. And since I'm always in trouble, there is not a day when I don't pray."
—Isaac Bashevis Singer, late Nobel laureate fur literature

* * *

"There are a lot more advantages to farming than disadvantages. You get up in the morning, about 5:15, and the birds are singing. You notice the trees, the sky, and the blooming lilacs. Where else can you work and feel such a part of God's creation?"
—Farmer Harry Verhoef of Pella, Iowa

* * *

"There is no higher title in the Christian community than to be a layperson, a member of the body of Christ."
—United Methodist Bishop Ruediger Minor, Leipzig, Germany.

"No war has ever brought justice or holiness to anyone."
—Bishop Raul Ruiz, Methodist Church of Mexico.

* * *

"Our Christian vocation is not to be where things are all right but where things are all wrong. And the worse they are, the more imperative it is for us to be there."
—The Rev. John Chryssavgis, Russian Orthodox Church in Australia, to the 16th World Methodist Conference in Singapore.

* * *

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings."

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : ____

(Last week's answer: Isaiah 42:1)

Readings for week of Aug. 19

Monday: Psalms 102:1-2
Tuesday: Psalms 102:3-12
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 18:24-27
Thursday: 2 Samuel 18:28-33
Friday: John 6:51
Saturday: John 6:52-58
Sunday: Ephesians 5:15-20

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Faith watch

SIERRA LEONE TROUBLES: The **World Methodist Council** was told during its recent meeting in Singapore that West African rebels who have refused to honor the cease-fire in Liberia are marauding along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border. The Rev. **Frank Davis,** representing United Methodist Bishop **Thomas Bangura,** said some churches were closed and one Methodist teacher killed as a result of rebel attacks. Mr. Davis said his government has requested troops from neighboring Guinea and Nigeria to help quell the outbreaks. He also asked for prayers from Methodists worldwide.

COVENANTS IN SIGHT: Representatives of The United Methodist Church negotiated two "covenant agreements" during the recent World Methodist Conference in Singapore. Bishops **Thomas B. Stockton** (Virginia Area), **R. Sheldon Duecker** (Chicago Area), and **David J. Lawson** (Wisconsin Area) completed talks with the **Methodist Church of Taiwan** and the **Methodist Church of Hong Kong.** The Taiwan church signed its agreement in Singapore, while the Hong Kong church opted to postpone signing until an error in translation is corrected. Bishop Lawson told the Reporter that the agreements—which must be ratified by the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.—formalize an existing relationship of mutual recognition and spiritual support between the two Asian churches and United Methodism.

FREEZE APPEAL: Hunger, evictions, foreclosures, unpaid bills and the personal humiliations that go with them are still resulting from last December's freeze in California, according to an alert from Church World Service and Witness, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches. More than 250 families a day are requesting food at a food bank in hardest-hit Tulare County, where at least 8,500 farm workers are unemployed because of freeze damage to crops. The United Methodist Committee on Relief has contributed $10,000 in aid, although contributions to the California Freeze Emergency fund totaled only $325 through June 30. Additional United Methodist contributions may be sent via annual conference treasurers to **California Freeze Emergency Advance Special No. 901115.**

WOMAN IS FIRST: For the first time a woman, **Donella Clemens** of Souderton, Pa., is moderator-elect of the 110,000-member Mennonite Church. Her election came as the historic peace church prepares a new peace education effort to stanch erosion in Mennonites' peace convictions.

'When the Lord calls, what do you say?'

Youths tell massive convocation what they must do to become followers of Christ

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBIA, Mo.—When the Lord has called you, how have you answered?

Do you put the Lord on hold, take the wrong message, or avoid answering the call altogether by using call forwarding?

Those were some questions asked by a youth leader witnessing to the Gospel at United Methodism's Youth '91 last week at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

During a Wednesday night worship service called "Empowering to Live as Disciples," three youth speakers told the crowd of some 3,300 participants in Hearnes Coliseum what they must do to be followers of Christ.

Still a witness

Angelina Arrington, a member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, said that despite being almost thrown into a swimming pool with her clothes on and being pied in the face in a cafeteria last week, she could still witness for the Lord.

Ms. Arrington served as chairperson of the Ethnic Minority Concerns Committee of United Methodism's National Youth Ministry Organization.

To answer God's call, said Ms. Arrington, you've got to do these things:

- Don't put the Lord on hold;
- Don't interpret the call to be something that it's not;
- Shut up and listen to the call.

"Some of us answer God's call by telling Him, 'Don't call me, Lord; I'll call you.' It's like a job interview when they say, 'Don't call us, we'll call you.'

"I know this thing has happened to quite a few of us and YOU don't appreciate it," said Ms. Arrington.

"How much of a letdown is that to you? How do you think the Lord feels when he calls you and you say, 'Oh, don't call me Lord, now, I've got too much stuff to handle'?

"If it were too much, He wouldn't be asking you to do it. We're not supposed to put the Lord on a job interview."

A round of 'Amens'

Ms. Arrington received a round of "Amens" when she asked the youths, "Isn't it terrible how we do the Lord?"

"If I were God, I'd be crying every day, seeing all the things that people do," she continued. "Like always asking for things and not giving anything back, burning crosses, being racist, and making ignorant comments. If I were God, we'd all be in trouble."

Another way some people answer God's call, said Ms. Arrington, is to say, "Well, the Lord hasn't called me yet.

"If you are 10,000 years old, with your BA and your Ph.D and the Lord hasn't called you yet, then there's something funny (going on)," she quipped.

'Yo, Samuel!'

"Remember how God called Samuel? 'I say, Yo! Yo, Samuel.' And Samuel said, 'What you say, Lord? You calling me?'

"The Lord called three times, or at least that's what Samuel heard.

"The reason Samuel knew why the Lord was calling him is because Samuel had emptied his cup and was ready to be filled up by the Lord."

Another youth speaker, Philip Greenwald of Findley Lake United Methodist Church in western New York state, said he learned three essentials for being a disciple in Christ from a youth he met on a Northeastern Jurisdiction "Mission of Peace" trip to Prague.

"First and most important is our personal communication with God, through prayer and Bible study," said Mr. Greenwald.

"Through prayer, my friend in Prague came closer to Jesus. And with God as the center of our prayer life, we found that we got closer to Him, closer to one another, and closer to the problems of the world around us."

Regarding the second essential, Bible study, Mr. Greenwald said his friend was excited about the new things he finds in the Scripture each day.

"And for me," said Mr. Greenwald, "the study of the word has become more than just reading it but looking for its meaning and application in my life."

The third task is forming a lifestyle of praise and worship of our king, said Mr. Greenwald.

"Through this lifestyle of praise and worship we find we can carry the excitment of worship with us as we move to a more daily, practical walk with God.

"As we are called to Christ and are empowered to live as disciples, I call you to come back to basics of Christian faith ... When Christ calls you to stand up in a life for Him, will you be ready?" Mr. Greenwald asked in closing.

The final youth speaker was Leslee Schilling, a student in the Maryland School for the Deaf.

She told Youth '91 through a sign language interpreter that the most important way to be a disciple of Christ is to love everyone.

"God wants people to love each other," said Ms. Schilling, a member of the Magothy United Methodist Church of the Deaf in the Baltimore Conference.

"God loves deaf people, people with cerebral palsy, mentally retarded people, blind people, and handicapped people and they love God.

"It doesn't matter whether you're deaf or hearing; black or white, Asian or Hispanic, male or female, God wants us to love everybody."

UM youths: 'Many but one'

Reporter Staff Special

COLUMBIA, Mo.—Hey, dudes and dudettes. If you call yourself a Christian and don't know the great commission, let me give it to you straight-up: Jesus said, "Go fish!"

Do you need an interpreter for the previous sentence? Well, conversation like that was clearly understood at University of Missouri in Columbia during Youth '91 Aug. 5-9.

Senior and junior high United Methodist youth and their "responsible adults" came from each of the 72 annual conferences in the United States and 19 other countries to learn that in Christ "we are many but are one."

From the crack of dawn to way past dusk, the 3,300 participants braved the scorching Missouri heat, living in dormitories with little air-conditioning and trekking on foot in shorts and T-shirts from building to building.

But the heat and the "humongous" campus never kept the folks from savoring every moment.

The meeting included:

- 70 "learning options";
- 18 Bible encounters, presenting creative ways to encourage youth to study Scriptures;
- 200 care groups, to help participants process what they experienced. These groups were also the primary source of love and caring for the Youth '91 event.

But the most memorable part of the five-day event was the gatherings in the Hearnes Athletic Center, featuring the best in contemporary Christian music, in such forms as rock, reggae, country-western and gospel.

Each morning, Youth '91 attendees gathered for Christian aerobics, prayer and praise.

Every afternoon, youth jammed the athletic building nearly an hour in advance for concerts by Australian singer Trisha Watts, "Say So," the Montana Logging and Ballet Company, Tony Melendez, and Grammy Award winners Take 6.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

COLUMBIA, Mo.—Kim, lead vocalist for the Nashville-based, Christian rock group "Say So" leads a morning praise session for Youth '91 at the University of Missouri in Columbia last week.

Clergywomen tell stories of support and encouragement

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

ST. CHARLES, Ill.—"I have a story," the Rev. Young Kim told her 900 clergy-sisters meeting last week for the 1991 International Clergywomen's Consultation.

Speaking in a strong, almost defiant voice, the United Methodist clergywoman said that her minister husband is a prisoner of conscience in a South Korean jail—and she wants him out.

Her husband's "crime?" He has publicly called for reunification of North and South Korea. Even though official efforts toward reunification are in process, Ms. Kim's husband was inexplicably charged with subversion.

"Please don't be silent!" she pleaded with participants at the fifth such clergywomen's gathering since 1975.

They were not silent

And silent they were not. Ms. Kim returned home to Korea bearing a large banner signed by hundreds of United Methodist clergywomen from around the world calling for her husband's release.

Ms. Kim, who was pastor of a United Methodist church in Brockton, Mass., before returning to Korea in 1989, told the Reporter she's quietly confident that such a statement of support from her sisters in faith will enhance her husband's fortunes when he goes before a judge Aug. 16 to be sentenced.

So it went for five days as other clergywomen told their "stories." Sometimes, like Ms. Kim, they spoke in public. Mostly, they talked in private to each other.

In so doing, one after another witnessed to the support and encouragement she had received as a result of this year's and previous consultations to which the church's 4,217 clergywomen are invited every four years.

The 1991 event, sponsored by the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, attracted clergywomen from all five U.S. jurisdictions and 10 other countries.

Many told their stories.

"When I came to my first clergywomen's consultation, I was fresh out of seminary and scared to death," a pastor from Texas said during one of many small group meetings.

"But when I saw women like me doing all these wonderful things, leading worship and preaching with so much power, I said to myself, 'Hey, I can do that too!' "

Not all stories, however, told of encouragement and support. Some were filled with pain.

Some filled with pain

The most public of such stories came in the form of a letter from a lesbian clergywoman from Canada.

The Rev. Joanne Carlson Brown stated in the letter, which was shared informally outside official events, that she felt "deep regret and anger" about a statement in pre-registration materials prepared for the event that advocacy efforts on behalf of lesbians and gays would not be part of the consultation.

The statement cited the United Methodist Book of Discipline which prohibits use of church funds to promote homosexuality.

Organizers of this year's consultation said privately that controversial news coverage of the 1987 consultation, which included an unplanned segment involving lesbian women, had jeopardized funding for the 1991 event.

Some 115 participants signed a letter in support of Ms. Brown, and approximately 70 pledged more than $26,000 toward funding an independent, alternate consultation in the future if the church does not reverse its stand on funding related to homosexuality.

The Rev. Lynn Scott, a staff member with the Higher Education and Ministry board, said that such actions would be considered along with other "evaluations" of the 1991 event.

Puppets enhance worship

This and any other controversy, however, was far outweighed in impact on participants by twice-daily worship services that extended the story-telling motif via music, drama, dance and four 15-foot-tall puppets.

The puppets, which were carried and manipulated by three people controlling each figure's arms and head, entered the football-field-sized worship area from the room's four corners, often to the rhythmic beat of drums.

Representing a Native American woman, an African-American woman Hispanic woman and an Anglo woman, the puppets acted out the "big story" of oppression experienced by women throughout history.

The Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Rader, superintendent of the West Michigan conference's Grand Rapids District, spoke for many participants when she said the puppets had "come alive" for her.

In so doing, she said, the puppets helped her experience vicariously the suffering of her sisters, many of whose stories continue to include physical abuse and other forms of oppression.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY STEPHEN L. SWECKER

ST. CHARLES, Ill.—Some of the more than 900 United Methodist clergywomen process to the beat of Korean drums toward the first plenary session of the 5th United Methodist International Clergywomen's Consultation.

Statements seek change in UM laws

Reporter Staff Special

ST. CHARLES, Ill.—The recent consultation of United Methodist clergywomen was not a legislative body, nor was any action taken or adopted in the name of the consultation.

Nevertheless, some 125 among the consultation's 900 registrants drafted 13 statements during the meeting that are planned to be the basis of petitions for changes in church law.

Those statements were publicly posted, and consultation participants were given an opportunity to endorse them. The statements, with endorsements, will be refined and forwarded for consideration to the church's 1992 General Conference in Louisville.

Among the statements were the following:

- "We affirm the full participation of gays and lesbians in the church. Therefore we petition the General Conference to eliminate par. 402.2j, 906.12 and the phrase in the paragraph on homosexuality in Section F of the Social Principles (... 'We do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider it incompatible with Christian teaching') and commit ourselves to work to eliminate homophobia" (endorsed by 350 participants).
- "We affirm in principle the provision that bishops shall not chair general boards and agencies or any major division thereof."

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CENTER OIRECTOR: Appalachia Service Project, a home repair and home building ministry, affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Manage programs of home repair at Chavies, KY year-round center; coordinate and supervise work of staff and volunteers; assist in fundraising and promotion; work with community agencies. Bachelor's degree preferred with experience in personnel management; construction knowledge and experience strongly preferred; good communication skills. Salary begins at $15,000 plus benefits. Send letter and resume to: Executive Oirector, Appalachia Service Project, 117 West Watauga Avenue, Johnson City, TN 37604. Deadline for applications September 6, position begins immediately.

FULL-TIME YOUTH OIRECTOR for 2500-member congregation of FUMC of Conroe, TX. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Search Committee, First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 928, Conroe, TX 77305.

OIRECTOR OF PROGRAM. Full-time. 1700 members. Background in youth ministry and/or Christian education. Building staff. Want to use gifted and enthusiastic person in areas of their strengths. Salary and benefit package above $30,000. First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 809, Fort Myers, FL 33902. (813) 332-1152.

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EXECUTIVE OIRECTOR Wesley Community House. Located in one of Louisville's historic districts, this non-profit agency provides senior and young adult programs, day care and after school facilities. Successful candidate will possess excellent interpersonal skills, ability to do long-range planning, fund raising, and maintain relationships with external constituencies. Must be able to manage staff of 40+ employees and 150 volunteers. Masters degree in social work or related field plus three years administrative experience or equivalent combination. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply. Send resume to: Search Committee, Wesley Community House, 803 East Washington Street, Louisville, KY 40206. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

IOWA UNITEO METHOOIST FOUNDATION seeks Executive Oirector. Primary responsibility will be fund raising. Expertise and 3 to 5 years experience in annual giving, capital campaigns, and deferred giving required. Must possess organizational, management, public relations and marketing skills. Send letter and resume including name, address and telephone number of 5 references to: IUMF Search Committee, 1019 Chestnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309. Oeadline September 10, 1991, or until filled.

FOR SALE — 1971 CHEVY 60 passenger bus, very good condition, excellent tires, new paint. $1500. Christ Church, Ft. Collins, CO (303) 226-2341.

Faith connections

50TH ANNIVERSARY: The 50th anniversary of the founding of the Methodist Youth Fellowship was celebrated Aug. 2-4 at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kan., site of the first conference. Among 40 participants were four people who served on the fellowship's first national council: **Margarita Irle Witt, Janet Metzger Dibrell, Phit Steer** and **Edgar Huffstutler.** Speaking at the reunion were **Jennifer DeVoe** of Helena, Mont., a leader of the current United Methodist National Youth Ministry Organization, and **Lynn Strother Hinkle,** NYMO projects director. Ms. DeVoe and Ms. Hinkle came to the reunion from the "Youth '91" convocation held at the same time in Columbia, Mo., (see stories elsewhere in this issue).

HOUSING 'BLITZ': Two United Methodist congregations in the Central Illinois Annual Conference were among groups nationwide that joined in a recent Habitat for Humanity "Building Blitz." Calvary UMC of Normal, Ill., and Wesley UMC of Bloomington, Ill., combined to build one of four houses during the July 22-28 event. **Paul Ball** led the team of volunteers from the two congregations who completed a home in Bloomington for **Donna Thornton** and her children, **Kiashon,** 7, and **Dalan,** 14. Habitat for Humanity, now in its 15th year, originally was organized to provide homes in developing countries. But in recent years it has worked extensively across the United States as housing costs have soared beyond the reach of many lower-income families.

FIGHT ADDICTION: A training seminar on theology and addiction, designed for clergy and laity, is planned Sept. 26-27 at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Topics to be addressed include theological perspectives on the drug crisis, public policy, public health issues, cultural values, healing communities and mission opportunities. Materials and models will be shared for both rural and urban settings. For more information, contact **Vergel Lattimore,** Methodist Theological School, 614-363-1146.

WALKING THROUGH HISTORY: Polytechnic United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, will celebrate its centennial Aug. 25 in a most unusual way—by having its members walk to or through all four sites the church has occupied. All are on or near the Texas Wesleyan University campus, including the school's Fine Arts Building.

NATIVE AMERICAN AWARDS: Four people have been awarded the 1991-92 Native American Seminary Awards by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. **Cynthia Abrams** and her father, **Marvin Abrams,** who are Seneca, are both starting their second year in the master of divinity program at the School of Theology in Claremont, Calif. Mr. Abrams is pastor of the Native American United Methodist Church in Norwalk, Calif., and Ms. Abrams is project director there. **Tyron Lowry,** a Lumbee, is a student pastor in the North Carolina Annual Conference and is beginning his second year in the master of divinity program at Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C. **Shirley Montoya,** a Navajo, will enter her final year in the master of divinity program at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. She is a candidate for ordination in the New Mexico Annual Conference.

A zeal for missions enlivens their music

'Voices of Youth' awakens delegates at 16th World Methodist Conference to global needs

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SINGAPORE—Their strong young voices soared over the 3,000 Methodists gathered at Raffles City Convention Center.

"Weave, weave, weave us together," they sang, while some of their number twirled around a beribboned cross held high by the tallest young man. "Weave us together in unity and love."

The 44 members of the choral group, "Voices of Youth Awakening the Church to Mission," were sending participants out from the 16th World Methodist Conference to spread the love of God among the people of a hurting world.

Full schedule for summer

The group's performance on the closing morning of the world conference was just one in a full summer schedule for the choristers who eight years ago were but an idea in the mind of the Rev. James Perry of Varina, Va.

That was when the United Methodist minister, on his way home from the Virginia Annual Conference's youth camp, pondered how he might gather a youth choir to perform for the benefit of United Methodism's Youth Service Fund.

Mr. Perry took the idea to the conference youth council, which in turn suggested he consider fashioning the choir as a mission education experience for high school- and college-age youth.

"Voices" was born.

"We want the youths to experience what Scripture says about mission, what United Methodists do in mission, and what it feels like to be personally involved in mission," Mr. Perry told the Reporter. He teaches choral music at Varina High School and is part-time minister of youth and music at Hopewell (Va.) United Methodist Church.

With its mission focus, each year's "Voices" choir not only performs but labors in a project chosen for that year's emphasis.

Went to Mexico

"One year we went to Mexico," said Mr. Perry. "This year, we've been singing in Methodist schools here in Singapore. When the conference ends, we're going on a mission trip to Malaysia. Next year, our emphasis will be children's ministries.

"The idea is for teens learning about mission to get the church excited about mission. We want people at the end of our concerts to stand, as in an altar call, and commit themselves to doing some specific mission."

Mr. Perry estimated that more than 10,000 people have attended "Voices" concerts in the past seven years.

Now a project of Virginia's mission education division and aided by grants from the church's General Board of Global Ministries, "Voices" draws enthusiastic endorsement from its young singers. They were garbed for their World Methodist Conference presentation in multicolored T-shirts emblazoned with a jigsaw-puzzle globe and the legend, "Peace It Together."

Kristy Jones, 17, of Concord, Va., said, "The first thing that attracted me was when I went to a concert and it just blew me away. You're spiritually moved, believe me."

Laurie Cooke, 18, of Manassas, Va., agreed. "When I see people stand up at the end of our concerts and make a commitment to mission, it's the most wonderful feeling."

Wayne Farmer, 21, of Smithfield, Va., added: "It's an indescribable feeling. The idea is that we're in mission to people, but we always get more out of it."

Mr. Perry noted that at least 15 "Voices exes" have chosen Christian vocations—including missionary service—as their full-time careers.

"The most powerful impact is for kids to find out that missionaries are real people," he said of the group's trainers.

Global church a theme

A subtheme of the "Voices of Youth" program is introducing young people to a "living global church," Mr. Perry added.

"We want to go back and share with the U.S. church the vitality and witness that we find in other countries," he said.

Mark Waligo, 25, a Ugandan studying at United Methodist-related Hiwassee College in Madisonville, Tenn., said his participation in "Voices" has been highly instructive.

"I've learned to share more," he told the Reporter in Singapore. "I've learned patience. I've experienced different parts of the world and different ways to worship.

"I think the church is built up more when youth are involved."

Judging from their standing ovation for "Voices of Youth," participants at the 16th World Methodist Conference thought so, too.

REPORTER PHOTOS BY ALEX VERGARA

SINGAPORE—Ugandan Mark Waligo (center) leads a dance as "Voices of Youth Awakening the Church to Mission" sings "Weave Us Together."

Music and mission highlight World Methodist conclave

SINGAPORE—Methodists from around the world joined in song, dance and worship during the recent 16th World Methodist Conference. At right, a Singaporean father and son share a song sheet during the mass worship service which drew 3,000 delegates and 7,000 Singapore Methodists to the Kallang Indoor Stadium. At left, a Singaporean woman dances the "Chan Mali Chan" during the "Festival of Methodism in Asia." The program introduced world conference delegates to the music, history and missions of several autonomous Methodist churches across the Asian continent.

REPORTER PHOTOS BY ALEX VERGARA

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UMs lead workshops at national Lutheran youth event

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Two United Methodists—recognized experts in their respective fields—waded through a conclave of 29,000 Lutheran youths recently.

They emerged with their faith strengthened in the coming generation of Christians.

United Methodists Jenna Schultz and George Ordway were selected by organizers to serve as workshop leaders for the recent national youth gathering of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The event took place in Dallas over the July 4 weekend.

'Called to Freedom'

Its theme, "Called to Freedom," centered not only on the secular holiday with which it coincided but also on the freedom of spirit explained in the book of Galatians.

Paul's epistle served as the biblical basis for the event's activities and was included, translated into contemporary English, in the participants' slick, four-color guidebooks.

Ms. Schultz, a United Methodist diaconal minister for 13 years, led workshops on teen suicide. She is executive director of Contact Telephone Counseling in Dallas, one of 60 suicide crisis centers certified nationwide by the American Association of Suicidology.

Her three workshops on teen suicide prevention—including techniques for peer counseling—attracted nearly 1,000 participants over the three-day event.

"I used an hour-and-15-minute format involving role playing on how to listen and respond to someone in crisis," explained Ms. Schultz, who attends Casa View United Methodist Church in Dallas.

She added that although the youths were "typical teens," their Christian commitment clearly showed in their discussions and behavior.

She got involved

"I got involved with the kids as much as I could with all their faith-related activities," she continued. "They had worship every morning at their hotels and group gatherings in two convention centers as well.

"You can't walk through a teen culture without getting the bad vibes that youths give each other. Yet I had such a sense of hope from the feeling I got from these kids. There was a real sense of the people of God celebrating together."

Dr. Ordway, who holds a Ph.D. in medical physiology, joined a Lutheran colleague, John Vanatta, M.D., in leading three 90-minute workshops on biomedical ethics. The two men teach at Southwestern Medical Center of the University of Texas in Dallas.

"We had about 120 people each session, so it was hard to have any kind of intimate discussion, but most were there because they were genuinely interested," Dr. Ordway said.

He added that his workshop gave the participants a grounding into the principles of making ethical decisions.

He said he was impressed that the youths' responses to the ethical case studies the two leaders presented ran a spectrum of opinion from conservative to liberal, but all ranged within a common Christian context.

"They reacted just like adults—there wasn't any 'typical teen' response," he noted.

Surprising reactions

One of the more surprising reactions he found was to a scenario in which a young man who has tested positive for HIV—the virus that causes AIDS—asks his doctor to withhold the information from his fiancée.

"Most felt that the fiancée should be told [about the infection]," Dr. Ordway noted. "They looked past the issue of doctor-patient confidentiality, believing that the woman should be saved despite the damage caused to society by the breach of confidentiality."

An active layman at Trinity United Methodist Church in Duncanville, Texas, Dr. Ordway said he was impressed watching the Lutheran youths and their sponsors "think things through" in the bioethical workshop.

Both Ms. Schultz and Dr. Ordway confirmed that the convocation was a spiritual lift for them.

"Anytime you bring 29,000 people together for an event of this kind, your faith is going to be strengthened," Dr. Ordway said.

Lutheran event offers tips for UMs

What lessons might the recent Lutheran youth conclave (see accompanying story) hold for similar events sponsored by United Methodists?

Jenna Schultz, a United Methodist diaconal minister, said she noted several practical applications for future mass gatherings.

"The national design team was very clear about its basic message on faith issues," Ms. Schultz said. "They used a biblical basis—the book of Galatians—but they stressed that those principles must be acted upon in contemporary culture."

Youths also were required to sign a covenant before the convocation, committing themselves to action on a particular issue, Ms. Schultz noted. In keeping with that covenant, many participants opted to spend a day with one of more than 100 outreach ministries in Dallas.

"They knew something would be required of them other than attendance," she said.

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The World Methodist Council: John Wesley's Connectionalism Covers the World

Dr. Nancy Carruth

This week's column is written by Dr. Nancy Carruth, who serves on the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council. Dr. Carruth also serves on numerous committees on the Conference level. She is a member of David Haas Memorial United Methodist Church in Bunkie.

The Sixteenth World Methodist Conference has just been adjourned by the newly elected chairperson, Dr. Donald English of Great Britain. The banners of each of the participating countries have processed out and old friends as well as new friends are saying their goodbyes. Some we'll not see for another five years, others (in our own denomination) we'll probably greet sooner.

It has been a conference of many high moments. We have worked hard and long on many issues including evangelization, family life, environment, human rights, peace, poverty, drug abuse, world economy, child advocacy, and others. In many ways it seemed like a prelude to our own General Conference.

The World Methodist Council is comprised of 64 churches with common roots in the Methodist tradition. The 500-member Council is a self-governing body. It meets every five years. Serving on this council for the next five years will be Bishop William B. Oden, Dr. Alfred Norris and myself. The purpose of the conference is to promote a sense of unity among all people of the Methodist heritage. The conference is composed of duly elected Council members, delegates and accredited visitors. There were 31 in attendance to the World Methodist Assembly from our Louisiana Conference representing the United Methodist Church.

The theme for this Assembly was "Jesus Christ — God's Living Word." The meeting place was Singapore and this was the first time this world body has met in an Asian country. The theme was expanded on each day in different sub-themes — "God's Creative Word," "God's Incarnate Word," "God's Prophetic Word," "God's Saving Word," and "God's Ultimate Word." Each day was begun with a Bible study and a major address. Then the 3,000 in attendance were divided into small groups of 10-15, called Pondoks (Asian word for small hut). Here we shared feelings and concerns gleaned from the messages of the morning. Bishop Oden and I each led one of the 200 small groups.

The singing here has been fantastic. As one person in my Pondok said, "I felt I was in an old camp meeting." Choirs from several neighboring countries of Asia have joined with Singapore choirs to render beautiful music for us. A choir of approximately forty young people from Virginia also sang for the Conference.

Other highlights included a "feeding of the 4000" when the Singapore Methodist Churches entertained us at the World Trade Center. Here we were served a typical ten-course Oriental meal. A rally of 10,000 was held on Sunday afternoon which included our delegation along with Methodists from all the Singapore churches. This took place in the Singapore Indoor Stadium.

In the first business session of the 500-member Council, Bishop Oden and I were elected to serve on the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council, 1991-1996.

Having also attended the last Conference (held in Nairobi, Kenya) it has been a marvelous experience worshipping with other denominations in our great heritage from all around the world. We have truly come to realize here that we are all sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ and we must share in the responsibility of spreading his message to the uttermost parts of the world.

Nancy M. Carruth

Thirty-One Louisiana United Methodists Catch the Spirit at the World Methodist Assembly in Singapore

Thirty-one United Methodists from the Louisiana Annual Conference joined over 3000 other Methodists from John Wesley's world parish for the sixteenth World Methodist Assembly (WMA) held in Singapore, July 24-31.

Amid the luxurious surroundings of the Westin Hotel Towers, delegates sang, worshipped together, took communion, and shared collective experiences in the 200 "pondoks" (small group sessions).

Dynamic preachers such as Dr. Theodore Williams, World President of the World Evangelical Fellowship; Dr. H. Eddie Fox, WMC World Evangelism Director; Bishop Denis C. Dutton, head of the Methodist Church in Malaysia; Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, prelate of the Sixth Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church; Dr. James I. Laney, president of Emory University; and Bishop Ruediger Minor, episcopal leader of the Presden Area of Evangelisch-Methodistische-Kirche repeatedly urged delegates and visitors to claim and reclaim John Wesley's focus on "vital piety" through the experience of the warmed heart in order to undauntedly challenge the cultural malignancies of the day. Dr. Joe Hale, General Secretary, summed up much of this spirit when he asked participants to decide if they were to be "the Church of the Culture or the Church of the Kingdom?" "What is there in your life," he continued, "does it take Jesus Christ to explain?"

Programs and preaching were interspersed with Bible study and music. International scholars such as Bishop Emerito P. Nacpil of the Philippines, the Reverend Rosanna Paniyo of Peru and Dr. Maxie Dunnam of the United States gave Scriptural undergirding to the daily subtopics around the WMA's general theme, "Jesus Christ, God's Living Word," while meetings were called together in praise with congregational singing led generally by the Reverend Brian Hoare and Bishop Forrest Stith.

Other times, the Assembly featured several of the Singapore and Korean Church choirs, the Singapore Boys Brigade Pipe and Brass Band, the Voices of Youth from Virginia and the Conference Choir which was composed of conference attendees, Paul and Joanne White, as well as about 100 other brave and beautiful musicians. Mr. Sam Liew of Singapore composed a hymn for the Conference under the title of the Assembly's theme.

Entertainment was centered on introducing conference participants to Asian customs and traditions, most notably in music and dance. Guests were hosted by Singapore Methodists (22,000 strong) to a dinner of native food which was mostly Chinese and quite similar to that found in the U.S.

A Festival of Methodism in Asia, a very sophisticated electronic show highlighting various ethnic church talent, was also sponsored by the Singapore Host Committee.

The biggest para-conference event however was the Sunday afternoon Mass Rally held at the Kallang Indoor Stadium. In a gathering reminiscent of our own Louisiana event, ten-thousand Methodists heard a joint choir, an inspiring message by Dr. William K. Quick of Detroit, Michigan, and an hour-long "witness" by Bishop Raul Ruiz Avila of Mexico that displayed an over abundance of verbal blessing.

Perhaps the most significant "hands on" experience of the conference came earlier that day, however, when conference guests visited local churches. American delegates who attended these services reported a sense of awe at the spiritual vitality and energy of Singapore Methodism and the incredible mission and purpose that Wesleyan-touched Christianity displays in that community at large. The dynamic power that forged American religious values in earlier times appears to be strongly at work in this island-state. The vow among many delegates was to carry this infectious enthusiasm back to their local churches in the United States.

The business side of the Assembly primarily occurred in meetings of the 500-member World Methodist Council (WMC) and was therefore largely nonvisible to WMA participants. (The WMC meets concurrently with the WMA.) Resolutions made by the Council spoke to international problems such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the destruction of the environment, human rights, drugs, militarization and the world economy. Of more local interest was the resolution asking for continued discussion between Singapore leaders and the WMC concerning the 1987 explosion of the Christian Conference of Asia by the Singapore government.

Additionally, an offering was taken to support victims of the recent eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. Much church property was destroyed by the volcano, according to their bishop, Dr. Emerito P. Nacpil.

The Reverend Donald English, general secretary of the Home Mission Divison of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, was elected head of the World Methodist Council's Executive Committee for the next five years. He succeeds Bishop Lawi Imathiu of Kenya. Two delegates from the Louisiana Annual Conference, Bishop William B. Oden and Dr. Nancy Carruth, were also elected to the Executive Committee.

PHOTOS BY DR. KEITH KREUTZIGER AND DR. STONE CARAWAY

A UMR Interpretive Analysis

Clergywomen 'steppin' out': The reformers of our time?

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

As a male colleague and I recently watched 900 clergywomen and a handful of men gather for worship during the 1991 United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation, my friend suddenly turned pundit.

Stephen Swecker

"What we're seeing," he said with a sweeping gesture of his hand, "is the future of the church."

His pronouncement stopped me in my mental tracks. Intuitively, I agreed with him. For starters, I was experiencing firsthand the energy and impact of an every-four-year event that I'd only heard about from my media colleagues.

It was easy to see how anyone, male or female, could get swept up in the event's vitality and mood of expectancy.

Realities buttress mood

Concrete realities buttress that mood. They include the fact that the ratio of women to men in some UM seminaries is approaching 50-50, and that recent ordination classes in some annual conferences contain more women than men.

In light of such realities, it is timely to pose a follow-up question to my colleague's observation:

What might the accelerating presence and impact of clergywomen portend for the "church of the future"?

Here are some hunches based upon what I experienced during the 1991 Clergywomen's Consultation:

✓ Diversity in the church—of theology, worship styles, and life-styles—will expand, not shrink.

You name it and somewhere during the recent clergywomen's meeting you could find it. "It" ranged from traditional hymns to reggae music; theologies of liberation to "old-time religion;" the Lord's Prayer to Eastern yoga; quiet meditation to dance and drama. Not everyone approved of everything that happened. But the variety of expression and style created a wide comfort zone for participants, both men and women.

In short, clergywomen are at least as varied in outlook and approach to matters of faith and practice as their male counterparts. Under the impact of their leadership, the church is likely to experience the blessings and burdens of becoming even more diverse, both in how it does its work and in the makeup of those who do the work. Amid such diversity, a key concern will be how to preserve the theological integrity of the church.

✓ Examples of male subjugation of women, both within and outside the church, will be increasingly identified, challenged and rejected as a perversion of God's will.

Workshop participants at the Clergywomen's Consultation identified no fewer than 33 ways in which men routinely dominate women. As described by the clergywomen, "male dominance" is expressed in ways that are widely accepted by society-at-large.

ST. CHARLES, Ill.—Participants at the recent United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation light a ceremonial bonfire to begin their meeting. Clergywomen are helping to challenge settled notions of what it means to follow Christ and to be people of faith.

Examples given of how men dominate women: by "trivializing our pain," "threats," "not listening," "talking louder and longer," "flirting," "hugging without permission," "be-a-good-little-girl syndrome" and "expecting women to take care of them." Mentioned also were examples of outright physical abuse and exploitation.

The church of the future, deeply influenced by women clergy, will be more informed and less tolerant regarding such behavior. This won't happen without pain, however, particularly among men who consider such matters "no big deal."

It is a big deal, though, and many clergywomen are daring to say so. In concert with enlightened clergymen, they witness to a "more excellent way" for men and women to relate as equals created in the image of God and possessing complementary gifts for serving God.

✓ Tensions regarding the status of gay and lesbian people in the church will continue.

Except for an optional workshop focusing on the work of the General Conference-mandated Committee to Study Homosexuality, no time was officially set aside during the consultation to deal with gay and lesbian concerns. And only 150 of the more than 900 present attended an announced informal meeting on the topic.

Nevertheless, an ad hoc, unofficial committee's call for the church's 1992 General Conference to drop United Methodists' negative stance toward homosexuality was endorsed by more than one-third (350) of consultation participants.

A shared history of sexual oppression provides for many women a powerful sense of identity with claims of oppression by gays and lesbians. Hence, it's likely that no group of comparable size is as committed to keeping this issue on the church's agenda.

✓ Emphasis on the Holy Spirit will dramatically challenge our understanding of authority in matters of Christian belief and practice.

It was no surprise that masculine imagery in reference to God and Jesus not only did not prevail but was nearly absent during the Clergywomen's Consultation. By contrast, appeals to the third person of the Trinity were prevalent under various names—the "holy" (the meeting's theme was "Illumination of the Holy"), "Light of life," "Fire," "Soul of the world," etc.

It was surprising, however, that some clergywomen said they routinely downplay references to Jesus and "Christ." Although such statements were few, it was apparent that large numbers of clergywomen identify the primary source of their spiritual authority in the aspect of the Trinity often associated with the feminine.

Implications of such a shift in emphasis are huge and potentially explosive. Among other things, contemporary experience of the Spirit—that is, being informed by Spirit-fed feelings, intuition and "story-telling"—could challenge Scripture and Christian tradition for primacy in discerning God's nature and will.

In addition, inherently unpredictable ways and readings of the Spirit presage the release of both heightened creativity and troublesome chaos in the church. Each would test the limits of what is acceptable as an authentic expression of Christian faith.

Stretching the Body

If the "future" described above seems eerily like the present, that's an indication that we're already experiencing forces from many directions, not only clergywomen, that are stretching and reshaping the Body of Christ.

There can be little doubt, however, that although still a minority, clergywomen are helping to challenge settled notions of what it means to follow Christ and to be people of faith. Indeed, for better or worse, future church historians may well deem them the reformers of our time.

The words of the closing song at the Clergywomen's Consultation reflect awareness that such a role entails risk. But they also underscore a gritty resolve to claim God's call to lead people of faith into a new day:

"Oh, I'm steppin' out, steppin' out on the promises. Oh, I'm steppin' out, steppin' out all the way. Oh, I'm steppin' out, stepping out on the promises. I'm living tomorrow today."

Letters to the Editor

We should treat new pastors as our neighbors

I am disturbed by attitudes occasionally found in congregations.

After annual conference, a change of pastors may come about. Many active church members who are loyal to the former pastor become very critical of the new minister.

This is usually followed by a withholding of vows to the church, as well as time, tithes and talents.

Sometimes, after pouring ourselves into church work for years, our own wishes become paramount and we tend to forget that it is God's will that we are trying to project. I cannot recall anywhere in the writings of the Apostle Paul that he expressed wishes other than God's.

Our pastors are chosen and assigned according to their abilities and each is usually well suited to his or her assignment.

Jesus commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Is not our pastor also our neighbor?

Gerald Ochsner
Robert, Louisiana

Priorities appall me

A recent issue of "Newscope" stated that "homosexuality, ministry and baptism are expected to be among the most publicized issues at the 1992 General Conference."

I am appalled if this is where United Methodists place their priorities when such issues as world peace, famine, poverty, homelessness, crime and drug abuse so urgently need to be addressed.

F. Richmond Leonard
Kissimmee, Florida

Can we have more time?

I do enjoy reading your paper. Enjoy isn't quite the right word! I benefit and am eager to hear about our church.

I have one suggestion. Your deadlines for response to your FaithLine questions are too soon for Western readers. Sometimes the cutoff date is past when I receive the paper—always too late to respond.

Olive B. Smith
Livingston, Montana

History study needed

I just recently finished reading "Strangely Warmed: The Amazing Life of John Wesley" by Garth Lean. A few months ago I read the autobiography of Peter Cartwright.

Both books were enlightening to me as to the way Methodism started and the hardships encountered by our early leaders, including John Wesley. I had read John Wesley's life history many times before, but the turmoil he was under in England had not registered with me.

A study should be created about early Methodism, its trials, tribulations, hard work, and the social obstacles early ministers and laity had to go through in order to establish Societies—churches—as exploration moved West.

This study should be frequently required for all members of the United Methodist Church, including clergy, so we don't forget what our forefathers suffered in establishing our church.

Reuel Buchanan
Morehead, Kentucky

Preachers, not readers!

When have you heard a good, inspirational sermon with any enthusiasm on the part of the speaker?

In my opinion, the church has too many readers and story tellers and not enough preachers. Many of the "preachers," from the very small church to the top levels, either cannot or do not preach.

When a minister brings a good sermon, with enthusiasm and expression, people will be there to hear it because there is a hunger for the Word of God.

Ernest O. Mabry
Lebanon, Tennessee

What others are saying

"For almost 20 years I have been conducting conferences and retreats for congregations of most of the major American Christian denominations. I have never found a congregation that was sincerely committed to helping equip its people for ministry in daily life that was not a vital, active, purposeful, and growing community of faith. Not a single one. Not in 20 years."
—William E. Diehl, author, "The Monday Connection."

***

"Although God uses medicine and psychology, these resources alone are insufficient to meet total human health needs. The most important factor in the healing process is the spiritual dimension."
—The Rev. James K. Wagner, director of prayer and healing ministries, The Upper Room.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"There is great gain in godliness with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Hosea 6:6)

Readings for week of Aug. 26
Monday: Psalms 67
Tuesday: Psalms 68:1-4
Wednesday: 2 Samuel 23:1-7
Thursday: 2 Samuel 23:8-17
Friday: John 6:55-69
Saturday: Ephesians 5:21-33
Sunday: Ephesians 6:1-9

My Witness

'Allowing' miracles can help make them happen

By JEAN B. ROTHE

Word of plans drifted back to me that my children were planning a special celebration at our United Methodist Church for my 90th birthday. I knew it was the custom to pin an orchid on women of our church who reached that age.

"But a special celebration? I'd rather just forget the whole thing," I told my family.

"OK," they said, "How about if we make it an 'alternative birthday' celebration?"

So we agreed on designating the money tree for Bob and Hazel Buckner, United Methodist missionaries in Nepal. For me, that made it different.

I was amazed by response!

Bob and Hazel have been UM missionaries in Nepal for about 25 years and have had a long connection with our church. To my amazement, the money tree set up for them brought a response of over $1,300.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Jean B. Rothe is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Chico, Calif. (California-Nevada Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

In notes of near apology to friends who sent checks from eight or nine states, and to those friends who responded in my area, I said, by way of justification, that my children told me, "Well, it might be important to let your friends know you've turned 90. If people wait until they are 100, they might sit there glassy-eyed throughout the whole party and not be able to enjoy it!"

I believe God can do wonders through us if we allow that process to happen. Recently, I decided traffic was too heavy where I live, and gave up driving just before renewal time for a new license on my 90th birthday.

When my neighbor wanted to buy the car, he said, "Yes, but you're just going to turn around and give it all to the church, aren't you!?"

That probably would happen

I laughed and allowed that probably would happen. My old Dodge brought $400, plus a refunded license fee of $27.

Sometimes our willingness to enable a miracle allows it to happen. While I am aware many people can not relinquish such an amount, and have food and housing needs of their own, that old car was turned into relief for world hunger through the United Methodist Committee on Relief—prompted, in part, by messages received on the UMCOR "HOTLINE" number.

Yes, God still works miracles and we can be fortified in our living by his overgirding and undergirding expressed in such Scripture verses as, "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Or, we may also value the opportunity of prayer, not limited to set times, but at all times, even instantaneous prayers as we are consumed in routine activities.

I can't fathom how you do it, God.
So many ask help from your hand.
But I know you are always listening,
And that you fully understand.
God, your switchboard's always open
And no busy signals ring;
There's an immediate connection
Without even a dialing.
Even though millions are asking
You can hear each one's call
And follow through their problems
To answer one and all.
And, God, I'm not just asking,
But listening to YOUR voice
So that my wishes and my will
Fulfill your plan and choice.

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

ROBBERS SHOOT PASTOR: The Rev. **Kenneth Prill**, 40, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Forest Hills, N.Y., was shot in the face when he was seized by a group of men during a 14-hour robbery spree July 31-Aug. 1. He underwent reconstructive surgery in Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn. The same men are believed to have killed a retired police officer and another man.

'POINT OF LIGHT': The 200-plus volunteers at Methodist Medical Center in Dallas were named the 537th "Daily Point of Light" last week in President **George Bush**'s effort to recognize 1,000 such "points" of service across the nation. The President recognizes a "point" a day six days a week. The Dallas hospital's volunteers put in more than 22,000 hours of service last year.

NOTED EDITOR DIES: **Charles Martin Laymon**, 87, a former pastor and editor of the Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible published by Abingdon in 1971 and editor and contributor to the International Lesson Series for 30 years, died July 11 in Maywood, Ill., after a long illness. A memorial service was held at First United Methodist Church in Gatlinburg, Tenn., July 13. Dr. Laymon wrote more than 30 books including the widely used college text, "Life and Teaching of Jesus (1955)".

ELCA PENSIONS SUIT IS FILED: The 5.2-million member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its Board of Pensions are being sued in Minneapolis by three pastors and a congregation who want the plan's 42,000 members to have the right to opt out of the pension plan and to have the right to withdraw their pension accumulations on demand. Suing are the Rev. **Thomas Basich** and his son, the Rev. **Matthew Basich**, both pastors at Advent Lutheran Church in Roseville, Minn.; their congregation; and the Rev. **Judith H. Boal**, pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Monaca, Pa.

EX-PRESIDENT ON ROLL: After attending there for many years, former President **Ronald Reagan** recently became a member of Bel Air Presbyterian Church in the Los Angeles suburb of the same name.

TRADITIONALISTS SEEK UNITY: Two of the largest "splinter" Episcopal denominations are calling for a united traditionalist Anglican denomination. They broke with the 2.4-million-member Episcopal Church in the 1960s and 70s over issues like the ordination of women and revisions to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. In a "Call for Unity," Archbishop **Louis Falk** of the 15,000-member Anglican Catholic Church and Archbishop **Anthony Clavier** of the 7,000-member American Episcopal Church urged traditionalists to gather Oct. 2-5 in Deerfield Beach, Fla.

PEACE CHURCHES REVIVING: The nation's three historic "peace" churches—the Church of the Brethren, Society of Friends and the Mennonites—are renewing a joint effort at peacemaking, 15 years after the collaborative project was originally launched. **John Stoner**, a Mennonite and program coordinator, said organizers invite Christians and all faith communities to join the three churches in creating a "culture of nonviolence."

Compiled from news and staff reports

Liberian churches help rebuild broken nation

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Bole recently traveled for 10 days in Liberia and Sierra Leone visiting church leaders and relief organizations. The following is the first of a series of reports.

By WILLIAM BOLE
Religious News Service

MONROVIA, Liberia—Last summer, at the height of a brutal and destructive civil war, the leading clergymen of this West African country were stalked by the armed forces of the late president Samuel K. Doe.

The bulk of the Protestant and Catholic leadership, including United Methodist Bishop Arthur Kulah, had to flee into exile, some barely escaping Doe's death squads. One Christian leader was captured and, according to church officials, literally thrown to the lions that Doe was known to keep in the courtyard of his presidential mansion.

The churches formed the base of non-military opposition to Doe, whose 10-year rule was widely viewed as corrupt and repressive. Now, with a cease-fire in place since late last year, congregations and church-run institutions are gradually reconstituting themselves.

Burden falls on churches

Yet more than this, a large burden has fallen on Liberia's churches to reconstitute an entire society—physically, morally and spiritually—once regarded as fairly stable and prosperous by West African standards.

The churches, mostly transplanted from the United States, have traditionally exerted a strong pull on Liberian society. This influence dates to the founding of the country by freed American slaves in 1822.

Today, following the bloody warfare, organized religion is virtually the only major Liberian institution that survives more or less intact.

Because of the hostilities, there are an estimated 1 million refugees and displaced persons—nearly half of Liberia's population. Tens of thousands of people have died from violence as well as malnutrition and disease brought on by the conflict, according to Western relief agencies.

Aside from the street venders and merchants who have recently begun to reappear along the battered streets of Monrovia, the business sector is shut down in this capital city. The labor movement has been wiped out, public schools have yet to reopen, and Liberia has no united government.

"It is now up to the churches to help our families, to do the counseling and the teaching, to reconcile people with one another and teach children to have respect for human dignity," said Peter Naigow, vice president of the Interim Government of National Unity.

The "unity" government, installed after the fall of the Doe regime, is more aspiration than reality. Backed up by a peacekeeping force of five West African nations, the government has jurisdiction only over the capital on Africa's Atlantic coast. The rest of Liberia—more than 90 percent of the territory—is controlled by the forces of rebel leader Charles Taylor.

Territorial tensions

The social and territorial divisions have imposed a particularly heavy burden on churches. Widespread displacement and family separation have complicated the task of reassembling congregations. And churches face the added challenge of recreating worship communities of people who, in many cases, fought against each other during the war.

In Monrovia, Liberian children are being taught in schools recently opened by churches, especially the Roman Catholic archdiocese. And churches, mostly Baptist, have become the places where Liberians pick up their food staples—rations of rice, beans and oil supplied by international relief agencies.

For most of this year, the country has been sustained largely by an infusion of aid from the international community.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

MONROVIA, Liberia—Skulls and bones are grim reminders of Liberia's deadly 15-month civil war. United Methodists are among Christians trying to rebuild the country.

Churches assist returning refugees

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

As the cease-fire in Liberia continues to hold, that country's council of churches is assisting returning refugees.

The council is trying to repatriate 10,000 refugees from neighboring Sierra Leone and had recently achieved a fourth of that goal, according to the Most Rev. George D. Browne, Anglican Bishop of Liberia.

Two United Methodist missionaries, Herbert and Mary Zigbuo, are working on the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Other United Methodist missionaries back in place in Liberia are Loretta Gruver and Jim and Mary Ella Brentlinger at Ganta and Frank and Carolyn Horton, in Monrovia.

Church World Service has sent 15 medical personnel to Liberia since the end of fighting last December, including several United Methodists.

PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

The Rev. Motalepula Chabaku, a native South African and United Methodist minister, told Youth '91 that young people are called to care for all God's people.

Youths challenged to 'do God's will'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBIA, Mo.—"You have been challenged by music, services, scripture in all forms. What is your commitment?

"Share and dare to stand for something. [Say] 'I want to serve Jesus Christ.'"

That "challenge to commitment" was lifted by the Rev. Motalepula Chabaku during the final service of worship at Youth '91 Aug. 9.

Sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship, the weeklong quadrennial meeting for United Methodist senior high youths was held at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

Ms. Chabaku, who resides in North Carolina, became a United Methodist minister after leaving South Africa in exile.

Do God's will on earth

Amidst cheers and waving of hands, she challenged the 3,300 participants to "do God's will here on earth."

Following her challenge, several youths ran to the high-tech altar, to hug her and tell her that they had accepted the call to Christian service in Christ.

Other youths in balconies several flights up from the main floor and who could not get to the altar also lifted their hands in praise, indicating the call to commitment.

Ms. Chabaku told the crowd that Youth '91 "has been one of the most meaningful, exciting experiences I have had with people like you."

Then, she explained that an event for United Methodist clergywomen was being held that same week and was concluding with an inspirational service similar to the one for the youths (see related analysis on page 2 of this issue).

"I am sharing this because some of you may come from areas where women are not called to ministry," said Ms. Chabaku. "But Luke tells you that there were many women who moved around Jesus."

The clergywoman said these women also stayed with Jesus during the crucifixion, took spices to his grave, then spread the news that "He is risen."

Many called into ministry

"I am saying that we belong to a church where God called men, women and youth into ministry," she said.

Ms. Chabaku said sometimes youths are from homes where parents don't listen to them and don't treat them like young adults just learning to know God in the faith.

She urged the young people—especially the young women—to be assertive and to act on their call to ministry.

Over a round of applause she shouted to the young people to "go home and demand that we get more money" so that they can be "the church of tomorrow and today."

Turning to issues of social justice, Ms. Chabaku explained to the youths how the lifting of economic sanctions against her motherland of South Africa has not really changed that nation. Black South Africans still do not have a vote in the central government, "and those laws were passed by Christians," she said.

Seek justice

The clergywoman urged the youths to "seek justice, not just for yourself but everybody."

"You are living in a country where racism is illegal," continued Ms. Chabaku. "But racism stills exists. You cannot be a Christian and be a racist in any church. You cannot be somewhere and destroy God's children."

Ms. Chabaku concluded with some advice for those who "really want to have a happy life."

"Forget the things that control you," she said. "You are called to care for all people. The world needs men and women who won't be bribed by money, drugs, sex, personal things."

Decade's data show church falls behind population growth

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

In 1980, with membership of 9,479,755, United Methodists made up 4.21 percent of the U.S. population of appoximately 225 million.

By 1990, with membership of 8,814,665, that had dropped to 3.55 percent of the U.S. population of approximately 248 million.

Those and other downside data are spelled out in the latest research bulletin from the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

The church's 9-state North Central Jurisdiction, with 4.29 percent of the population in 1980 and 3.59 percent in 1990, was closest to the national percentages.

The 12-state Northeastern Jurisdiction dropped from 3.40 percent of the population to 2.94; the 8-state South Central Jurisdiction from 5.72 to 4.91; the 9-state Southeastern Jurisdiction from 6.61 to 5.65, and the 12-state Western Jurisdiction from 1.36 to 0.99.

The percentage-of-population figure dropped between 1980 and 1990 in all 72 of the church's annual conferences in the U.S.

All 5 jurisdictions down

In addition to the drops vis-a-vis population, between 1980 and 1990, United Methodist membership totals dropped in all five jurisdictional conferences within the United States and in 56 of the 72 annual conferences.

Only in the Southeastern Jurisdiction—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky—did the denomination come close to holding its membership steady during the 1980s.

Membership fell by 1 percent—from 2,924,625 in 1980 to an estimated 2,894,087 in 1990—in that jurisdiction.

In the South Central Jurisdiction—Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas—the drop was 4 percent, from 1,940,972 in 1980 to an estimated 1,871,193 in 1990.

Other jurisdictional membership comparisons for 1980 and 1990:

Northeastern Jurisdiction—Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia — 1,924,653 in 1990 to 1,721,623 in 1980, a drop of 10 percent.

Western Jurisdiction—Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Hawaii—554,244 in 1980 to 494,491 in 1990, a drop of 11 percent.

North Central Jurisdiction—North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio—2,135,250 in 1980 to 1,822,260 in 1990, a drop of 15 percent.

For the denomination as a whole within the United States, the membership loss from was 7 percent, from 9,479,755 in 1980 to 8,814,665 in 1990.

Fourteen report growth

Fourteen annual conferences reported membership growth between 1980 and 1990. They were:

Southeastern Jurisdiction: Alabama-West Florida, up 5 percent; Florida, 5; Kentucky, 1; North Carolina, 3; North Georgia, 11; Red Bird Missionary, 10; South Carolina, 1.

South Central Jurisdiction: Central Texas, up 11 percent; North Texas, 1; Oklahoma, 2; Oklahoma Indian Missionary, 4; Texas, 8.

Western Jurisdiction: Alaska Missionary, up 12 percent; Desert Southwest, 3.

Two conferences reported zero growth/loss: Western North Carolina, holding virtually steady at just over 276,000 members, and Southwest Texas at approximately 107,000.

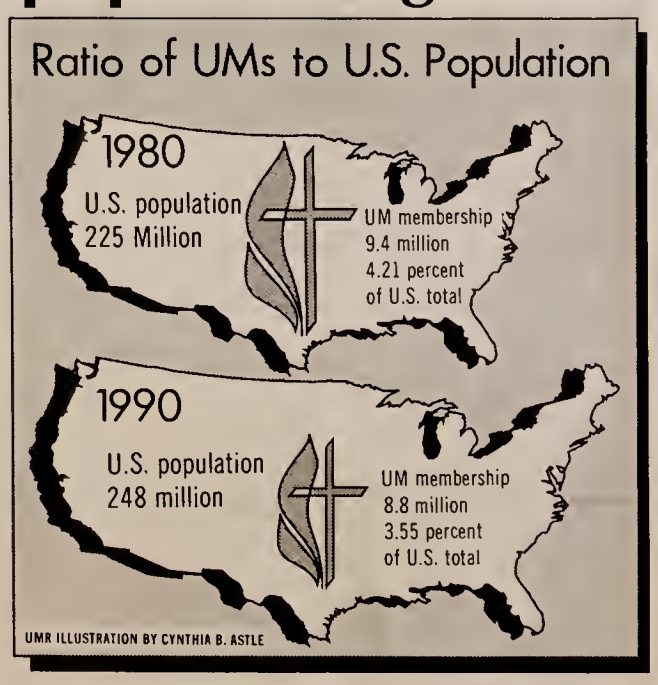
No annual conferences in either the Northeastern or North Central jurisdictions reported membership gains between 1980 and 1990.

Data in the Board of Global Ministries report are based on U.S. population figures and on membership totals published by "Newscope," the weekly newsletter published by The United Methodist Publishing House.

One positive commentary

The Global Ministries report found only one bit of data for positive commentary.

"Some conferences," the report said, "posted fewer losses in the last part of the 1980-90 decade as compared to the first part. This was most notable for Peninsula, Western Pennsylvania, Wyoming (portions of Pennsylvania and New York), South Georgia, Tennessee, Little Rock, Rio Grande, California-Nevada and Oregon-Idaho. . . ." In some respects, the emphasis since the 1988 General Conference on vital congregations may be producing some fruit."



UMR ILLUSTRATION BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Between 1980 and 1990 the U.S. popoulation grew by nearly 10 percent, from 225 million to 248 million. During that same period, United Methodist membership in the United States fell by a little more than 6 percent, from 9.4 million to 8.8 million. The drop was consistent across the denomination, measurable in all five jurisdictional conferences and in all 72 annual conferences. Only 14 annual conferences reported membership growth during the 1980s, but even that growth was not enough to keep up with population gains.

Director of Enrollment Management

The Candler School of Theology, a professional school of Emory University and one of the thirteen official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, seeks to employ a Director of Enrollment Management. The Director of Enrollment Management will have responsibility for admissions, financial aid, and enrollment management and will report directly to the Dean.

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Faith connections

POSITION TESTED: A national United Methodist agency's declared openness "to the full participation of all people, including gay men and lesbians" will be tested before the denomination's highest court in October. The nine-member Judicial Council has been asked by the denomination's Northwest Texas Annual Conference to rule whether a 1990 action by the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns to become a "reconciling commission" violates a church law against use of funds "to promote the acceptance of homosexuality." The Northwest Texas conference request is one of 14 issues of church law docketed by the Judicial Council for its Oct. 23-26 session in Indianapolis.

RURAL CHAPLAINS: A United Methodist Rural Chaplains Association has been organized. The association will help rural ministers gain skills to provide services in "town and country" settings and to interpret ministry needs in those areas to local congregations. For information, write the Rev. **Stevan Haiflich**, Center for Town and Rural Ministries, P.O. Box 29044, Columbus, Ohio 43229

CORRECTION: An incorrect membership figure for the Northern Illinois Annual Conference was published July 19. The conference's correct 1990 membership was 139,352 and the amount of decline was 2,243. The error resulted from incorrect figures previously reported by the conference.

$25 MILLION EARMARKED: The United Methodist Board of Pensions is earmarking a second $25 million for investment in low- and moderate-income housing. The recent decision by the board's lay and clergy directors is a follow-up to the favorable experience from the initial allocation of $25 million, said the Rev. **James F. Parker**, general secretary of the pensions agency. With a portfolio valued at more than $4.3 billion, the Board of Pensions is the denomination's biggest investor.

BLACK COLLEGE FUND: United Methodists gave $2.5 million during the first six months of this year to the Black College Fund, which supports 11 historically black schools in the United States, slightly more than was given during the same period in 1990. Contributions through June 30 represent slightly more than one fourth of the apportioned goal for the year. As is true of other churchwide funds, most money comes in during the last quarter of the year.

NEW FAMILY MINISTRIES UNIT: A new unit to focus on family ministries and annual conference relationships has been created by the United Methodist Board of Discipleship in Nashville, and will be headed by **Marilyn Magee**, assistant general secretary for the board's section on Christian Education and Age-Level Ministries.

Homeless children have friends at church

by CATHY FARMER

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—One thing always leads to another, especially for a Christian, a member of First United Methodist Church in Memphis has found.

When Karen Barber invited strangers—people who had no other place to go—to spend Christmas with her at her downtown apartment, she had no idea what "the rest of the story" would be.

She had asked her guests to bring a covered dish and a Christmas ornament.

When the party was over, the group took leftovers to the Salvation Army. There they discovered a large number of homeless children spending the holiday.

After returning the next day with presents for the children, she vowed to find some way to help them year-round.

First, she volunteered to work at the Memphis Housing Authority's emergency shelter. There she learned that Memphis has 2,000-3,000 homeless children—newborns to 12-year-olds.

Many have been homeless for as long as three years, living with their mothers in abandoned buildings and in cars and attending school sporadically, Ms. Barber said.

She helped draw her church into the program after the congregation's singles group suggested creation of a library for the children.

A church book drive, sponsored jointly with a local book store, resulted in the retailer's donating a book to match each one donated by church members.

The library, in the church basement, is open two afternoons monthly, and children are bused in to take advantage of available books.

"You should have seen their faces when we told them they could take a few books home with them to the shelter," recalled Ms. Barber.

Volunteers ride on the buses and help at block parties, which are also part of the activities of the program, along with parties and dinners provided by local restaurants.

"We've taken them skating (and) to a sheep ranch," Ms. Barber added.

"We usually have between 30 and 125 children at a time. The Memphis Housing Authority brings them over in buses and vans."

James C. Crittenden, shelter coordinator, said the children love the program and it provides cultural enrichment for them.

A children's choir has resulted in "five of the boys (getting) music scholarships, and we've sent 13 to Mississippi Valley State University," he added.

But the "rest of the story" is not the end of the story.

With the numbers of homeless children showing no real decline, help is still needed, Ms. Barber said, as she looked at the unpacked boxes of books in the library.

"We need volunteers. We need people to be with the children, to read to them, to help by shelving books."

Ms. Farmer is editor of the Memphis Conference edition of the United Methodist Reporter.

PHOTO BY CATHY FARMER

MEMPHIS—Karen Barber is surrounded by some of her new friends in a volunteer helpers' program at First United Methodist Church, Memphis.

Close-harmony Christians mesmerize UMC youths

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBIA, Mo.—"Does anybody believe in the saving power of Jesus Christ? That's what we're here to celebrate, being saved and having the victory already."

That's the Gospel message heard by some 3,300 United Methodist senior high youth and youth leaders during a concert by the Grammy Award-winning group, Take 6, at Youth '91 early this month.

The Take 6 concert was one of three afternoon "celebrations in Christ" at the University of Missouri Aug. 5-9. The week-long event was sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship.

One vocalist yelled, "We're happy. That's the joy you can't take from us . . . being filled with Jesus."

Asking the screaming teenagers between burst of applause "Do you believe?" the six-man group mesmerized the audience with such inspirational tunes as "Oh, Mary, don't you weep," "If we ever needed the Lord" and "I L.O.V.E. U."

"You didn't know you were going to come to a church service," said one singer. "When times get so hard, and when we get so bogged down with hotel rooms, there's one place we can go where it's nice and quiet. That's where the Lord says, 'Come unto me.'"

Claude V. McKnight III, the group's founder, describes the style of Take 6 as "contemporary Christian a cappella pop jazz."

The group rarely uses a musical instrument. They sing close six-part harmony and sometimes imitate instrumental sounds with lead vocals, rhythm and percussion.

Take 6 had its beginning in 1980 as the Gentlemen's Estate Quartet at the 1,200-student Oakwood College in Huntsville, Ala. In 1987 the name was changed to Take 6.

Members are Joel Kibble, Mark Kibble, Cedric Dent, David Thomas, Alvin "Vinnie" Chea and Mr. McKnight. The Kibble brothers are "PKs" (preacher's kids.) All are Seventh-day Adventists.

Take 6 members say they don't take their lyrics lightly and have never considered watering down the straightforward Gospel lyrics the group sets to such dazzling music.

"I see this as a ministry first and art second," said Mr. Dent.

Other members added that the music of Take 6 is a tool to get the Gospel message to a young audience and to show that "being a Christian can be fun."

They contend that young people should not leave the church merely because they cannot relate to conservative Christian music.

In an interview with the Reporter, Mr. McKnight said, "The one thing about being a Christian group is that the Lord has blessed us to be pioneers."

Their "pioneering" projects have been commercials for fast-food restaurants; sound tracks for billion-dollar movies and theme songs for Emmy Award winning TV shows.

But Take 6 would not exist, continued Mr. McKnight, "without staying on our knees in prayer."

With a lively, sometimes danceable beat in all of their music, Take 6 members say their goal is always "to guide you to those songs to point you to Christ.

"We never would have thought that little kids would be singing our songs as well as adults," said Mr. McKnight. "If we can be that vessel to make the Lord use someone, then we want to point them to Christ."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

COLUMBIA, Mo.—Members of the Grammy award-winning group, Take 6, relax following their recent concert at United Methodism's Youth '91. From left are Joel Kibble, Mark Kibble, Cedric Dent, David Thomas, Alvin Chea and Claude McKnight III (see accompanying story).

OFFICIAL U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTO

WASHINGTON—Gen. Carl E. Mundy passes the colors to Sgt. Maj. Harold G. Overstreet during recent ceremonies installing Gen. Mundy as commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Lifelong UM sworn in as Marine Corps commandant

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

The new Marine Corps commandant is a United Methodist who is described as a man "who puts his religious faith in the front of everything he does."

In a recent Washington ceremony viewed by Vice President Dan Quayle, two companies of Marines and some 3,000 spectators, General Carl E. Mundy Jr. was sworn in as the corps' 30th commandant.

The Atlanta native was selected commandant while serving as the Commanding General of the Fleet Marine Force in the Atlantic.

Gen. Mundy is a graduate of Auburn University, the Marine Corps Command and Staff College and the Naval War College.

He and his wife, Linda, have three children—Elizabeth, Carl III and Timothy. Both sons are Marine officers.

The general is expected to be a positive role model for Marines, Captain Don Krebbe, chaplain at Marine Headquarters, told the Reporter.

He is a "Christian gentleman, but he is a Christian first," Chaplain Krebbe said.

"He knows how to use chaplains in a spiritual sense," he said.

The general and his family are moving to temporary housing in Washington because renovations to the commandant's quarters are underway. When the final move is completed, the family will have moved 32 times during Gen. Mundy's career.

"At present, General Mundy is attending worship services at the chapel in the Navy Yard," Chaplain Krebbe said. He is expected to find a United Methodist church home after his move is completed.

Gen. Mundy served in Vietnam. His decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

Preacher, teacher top Hall of Famers on this list

Two United Methodist churchmen beat out Hall of Famers Jackie Robinson and Henry Aaron in one former major league baseball manager's lineup of favorite folks.

The two are the only non-baseball people on Bobby Bragan's Top-10 list.

Mr. Bragan managed three major league teams in four cities during the 1950s and 60s: Pittsburgh Pirates, Cleveland Indians, and Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves.

Mr. Bragan, described as the "cheerleader/permanent president" of the Wesley Class at First United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, put his church's senior minister, the Rev. Barry Bailey, in the number five spot on his list of "10 favorite people."

Mr. Bragan said Dr. Bailey "renders service to every element of humankind and works around the clock in God's cause."

In the number seven spot in his "batting order" he placed the late Eugene Johnson, a Sunday School teacher at First United Methodist Church in Birmingham, Ala., Mr. Bragan's hometown.

"During World War II he maintained communication with some 70 young men from class in military service," Mr. Bragan, 73, recalled. "We loved him not only for his lessons but for his caring of all of us."

The others on Mr. Bragan's list are, in order, Branch Rickey, E. J. "Buzzie" Bavasi, John McHale, Leo Durocher, Julio de Arcos, Tom Lasorda, Jackie Robinson and Hank Aaron.

Mr. Bragan now is assistant to the president for special projects with the Texas Rangers and a popular speaker at sports events.

He is a lifelong Methodist/United Methodist and a longtime leader in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Most information for this article appeared first in an article by Sam Blair, a sports editor, in the "Dallas Morning News." Mr. Blair is a member of First United Methodist Church in Arlington, Texas.

Pennies-counting church overcomes thrift's failure

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

What if your congregation wrote a check to pay 100 percent of your "fair share" of connectional responsibilities and the check bounced because your financial institution was shut down by the state?

That situation faced North Kingstown (R.I.) United Methodist Church seven months ago when Rhode Island's governor closed numerous under-insured credit unions and state banks, including the Davisville Credit Union where the church kept its funds.

"Our church started 1991 with nothing but what was in the collection plate on the first Sunday," said the Rev. Richard Dupee, former pastor of North Kingstown who now serves Wakefield-Lynnfield (Mass.) United Methodist Church.

"We just counted the pennies and kept going."

Mr. Dupee said that despite the immediate financial hardship imposed by the credit union closures, the North Kingstown congregation didn't think of not paying its connectional support.

"The people of the church knew we owed the ['fair-share'] money," Mr. Dupee told the Reporter. "The annual conference was very generous in that it went ahead and credited us for having paid our full apportionment for 1990 even though the check bounced.

"The conference trusted us, and we felt we should honor the obligation."

Making good on the bounced check for $4,081 took "waiting out" Rhode Island's financial upheaveal, Mr. Dupee added.

"We got some money in dribs and drabs—$100 here and there—until finally all our funds were released," he said.

The North Kingstown congregation's committment earned it a "well-done!" letter from Sandra Kelley Lackore, treasurer of the Southern New England Annual Conference.

"In the face of adversity and the closing of the Rhode Island credit unions, your church was put in an untenable position," Ms. Lackore wrote. "It is a wonderful testimony . . . that North Kingstown has now remitted its full 1990 apportionments."

Mr. Dupee said he hopes other United Methodist congregations will learn from North Kingstown's unfortunate experience.

"Keep your money only in federally insured credit unions or banks," he urged. "I wish we'd had the same advice a year ago."

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Old-fashioned camp meet lives on

Examples abound, none better than one real jewel in West Virginia

By RANDALL BALMER
Religious News Service

HINTON, W. Va.—I won't soon forget my conversation with Melvin Bennett.

Last spring I began searching for an old-fashioned camp meeting for a public television documentary.

There are plenty of choices, from Florida to Washington, from California to Pennsylvania. Many are small and sparsely attended. Others with longstanding suspicions of "worldly entertainment" were skittish about allowing television cameras onto the grounds.

I settled, finally, on the Mount Olivet Camp Meeting just outside of Hinton, W. Va.

This camp meeting, founded in 1916, nearly disbanded seven or eight years ago, but the Rev. Allen Gallimore of nearby Oak Hill thought it was worth saving. He assumed the task of organizing the annual event, and once again about 100 of the faithful from the surrounding area gather for a 10-day revival late in July.

What attracts them? They come for the same reasons that their spiritual forebears attended camp meetings on the frontier early in the 19th century. They come for the singing, the preaching, the socializing and, as we discovered at Mount Olivet, the food.

Camp meetings tamed much of the rowdiness of the frontier. Due to the cheap and plentiful supply of grain, alcohol abuse was rampant, with a per capita consumption more than three times today's standards. Inebriation led to the abuse of wives and children, neglect of the fields and outright violence. One in three brides was pregnant.

Hundreds would attend

Camp meetings changed that. The announcement of a camp meeting would draw hundreds, even thousands of settlers from the surrounding area. They would camp near a source of fresh water and stay as long as several weeks.

Although wags commented that as many souls were conceived as converted during antebellum camp meetings, the events undeniably brought evangelical religion to the frontier. The revivals also organized the settlers into churches—most of them Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian or Churches of Christ.

By the middle of the 19th century the spontaneity of early camp meetings gave way to regularized forms. Many camp meeting associations purchased permanent sites and put up buildings.

In 1845 B. W. Gorham published "Camp Meeting Manual," which provided step-by-step instructions for organizing and conducting a successful camp meeting.

After the Civil War, camp meetings in the northeast at places like Ocean Grove, N.J., and Oak Bluffs, Mass., became vacation spots. Weary industrial workers could escape the cities, frolic along the sea and also find spiritual sustenance.

Mount Olivet Camp Meeting in rural West Virginia, however, more nearly approximates the gatherings of the early 19th century. When I asked Mr. Gallimore to direct me to someone who knew the history of Mount Olivet, he introduced me to Melvin Bennett, a voluble man who is quick to tell you that he is 88 years old.

Recalls many sermons

For 48 years Mr. Bennett worked for the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, which, together with coal mining, was once the lifeblood of this region. He can remember the gathering of wagons along Madam Creek every summer at camp meeting time. He recalls many of the sermons he's heard at Mount Olivet over the years, even though he can't remember the names of all the preachers.

"They used to preach for two or three hours at a time," he said. "Of course, they can't do that anymore. People wouldn't tolerate it."

Some evenings during the camp meeting years ago, Mr. Bennett said, gesturing to the surrounding hills, "you could hear voices in prayer echoing all up and down this holler."

A baptismal service concluded the camp meeting. Everyone would gather down at the creek, and those who had been converted would be immersed.

"That was before the hard roads came in," Mr. Bennett explained.

In later years, baptismal services took place in New River a couple of miles down in the valley.

I asked Mr. Bennett to show me the baptismal spot, and we walked to a small bridge overlooking Madam Creek. He pointed to a tiny berm a hundred yards downstream and explained that they would dam the creek with rocks in order to make a pool deep enough for the baptisms.

"Wouldn't it be wonderful," he said, gazing into the distance, "if they would clear out that debris and have baptisms there again?"

I commented that Mount Olivet Camp Meeting seemed quite special to him.

Mr. Bennett replied that he had helped clear the boulders for the grounds and that his father had provided the lumber for the buildings.

As he walked away it occurred to me that many people consider the camp meeting a relic of a bygone era, one that is utterly irrelevant to an age of mass communications.

Melvin Bennett, I think, believes otherwise.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

OCEAN GROVE, N.J.—Ruth and Walter Dietz have spent the past two summers in a two-bedroom tent at what began as a historic camp meeting site (see related story at left). But after the Civil War, places like Ocean Grove became vacation spots.

Bioethics: Life/death issue of the 90s

By A. JAMES RUDIN
Religious News Service

Analysis

Bioethics is becoming the civil rights issue of the 1990s.

During this decade, most Americans will be involved in making life-and-death decisions for a family member or for a friend.

Although modern medicine has made giant leaps forward in the treatment of many diseases, it has not helped us with the frightening ethical questions that come with that new science and technology.

Only recently have ethicists, legal experts and religious leaders begun to devise ways to preempt end-of-life dilemmas.

One way is through "living wills." Another is to assign a proxy, an option now available under law in 33 states.

Last year, the United States Supreme Court ruled that 32-year-old Nancy Cruzan, who was paralyzed in an automobile accident in 1982 and who was being artificially fed through her nose, must be kept alive in a hospital.

Her anguished family claimed she preferred to die rather than continue in a persistent vegetative state with such ultimately futile treatment. But the Supreme Court was unconvinced because Cruzan had left no precise instructions regarding her treatment in the event she lost her own capacities.

After receiving new testimony, the Missouri state court finally allowed withdrawal of life support systems from Cruzan, and she died last December. The long agony of the Cruzan family finally ended.

But the Cruzan family is not unique. A kind of medical gridlock exists in hundreds of hospitals when tormented family members desperately seek legal authority to end a loved one's existence. Courts, quite correctly, are not eager to accede to the poignant but often confused cries and whispers of families who wish to withdraw life support systems from comatose patients.

The medical profession, terrified by countless malpractice suits, often overtreats such patients. And an already overloaded court system is being flooded with medical treatment cases.

State legislatures have begun providing ways to prevent future Nancy Cruzan cases. In New York, for instance, the state measure is called the Proxy Health Care Law. At the heart of such legislation is the often forgotten concept of the patient's best interests and patient autonomy.

The New York law was the product of the state's Task Force on Life and the Law. After much intensive debate among the task force's 25 members, the proposed law was endorsed by many religious groups including the New York State Council of Churches, the New York Catholic Conference and major Jewish organizations.

A number of important religious questions were raised within the task force, including fears that the law might become a "slippery slope" that would permit assisted suicides for seriously ill patients.

It was the religious community that insisted that the proxy law include safeguards that will prevent any excess or misuse of the proxy's decision-making authority.

Rabbi Rudin is the interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee and a member of the New York State Task Force on Life and the Law.

History of Hymns
Praise and peace blend in choral festival's hymn

Savior, again to thy dear name we raise
With one accord our parting hymn of praise;
Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
That in this house have called upon thy name.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

John Ellerton wrote the hymn to be sung at the conclusion of a choral festival at Nantwich, Cheshire, England, in 1866. More than a dozen choirs shared in this festival and, standing in their beautiful multicolored gowns, they sang this closing hymn.

One can visualize the choir festival in the lines of the opening stanza.

Subsequent stanzas pray for peace—peace at the end of the day, in earthly life, in the church, in the land, in each heart, and peace in death.

Reared in an evangelical family, Ellerton was educated at King William's College, Isle of Man, and at Trinity College, Cambridge.

Ordained in the Church of England in 1850 at age 24, he exhibited great interest in the social concerns of his day.

Ten years later he was appointed vicar of Crewe Green, near Liverpool. Here were located the shops of the London and Northwestern Railway Company, which involved a Mechanics Institute.

Ellerton became chairman of the education committee for the institute and caused it to become one of the most successful in England. He himself taught English and Bible history.

The writing of hymns became his consuming passion. He is credited with more than 85 original hymns and translations, most of which were first sung by his congregation at Crewe.

The hymn tune used in singing Ellerton's hymn is called "Ellers." It was composed by Edward J. Hopkins in 1869. A highly respected organist, he played at Temple Church, London, for 55 years.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"O How I Love Jesus"

Suicide 'manual' brisk sales trouble ethicists

By PAMELA SCHAEFFER
Religious News Service

Experts in medical ethics are surprised and worried by brisk sales of "Final Exit," a suicide manual for the terminally ill, contending that the book short-circuits an important social debate.

"There has been a stunning shift," said Philip Boyle, associate for religion at the Hastings Center, a medical ethics think tank in Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.

For centuries "suicide has been a proscribed activity. Now there is a growing trend; people have almost begun to baptize it. It is almost as if the onus is on people who oppose suicide to show why it's wrong.

"What this book tends to do is to really short-circuit a commitment on the part of the entire society . . . to try to find better ways of caring for the dying and give people greater control over the dying process," he said.

Derek Humphry, author of "Final Exit," is executive director of the Hemlock Society in Eugene, Ore. The organization advocates euthanasia and suicide for the terminally ill.

Mr. Humphry's book, published several months ago, has surged to the top of the New York Times Best Seller List, taking first place in the hard-cover category.

Like Mr. Boyle, Donald H. J. Hermann, professor of law and philosophy at DePaul University in Chicago and director of the university's Health Law Institute, said he finds the book "inappropriate" because a self-help book "end-runs" serious discussion.

Martin Marty

But Martin E. Marty, historian of American religion at the University of Chicago Divinity School, believes the provocative nature of Mr. Humphry's book will smoke out latent controversy.

The strong sales of "Final Exit" so soon after its publication are "a revealing symbol" that the time for a debate on suicide to enter the public arena is long overdue, he said.

Scholars have been discussing the morality of suicide for the terminally ill for several years, Dr. Marty said, adding: "I have 12 better books on the subject than 'Final Exit' on my shelves right now."

But a longstanding taboo against suicide in Western culture has kept the debate from reaching the public, he said.

Meanwhile, experts worry that the book could be damaging because it makes suicide for the terminally ill seem overly easy and because it may alleviate pressures on health care professionals to keep dying people comfortable.

Experts say that, given proper medical care—including enough medication to relieve pain—only a few terminally ill people would find their situation so hopeless and painful that they would contemplate taking their own lives.

Want an old religious book? This entrepreneur may have it

By HELEN GRAY
Religious News Service

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—When someone needs the words to an old song, a librarian can often help.

But if the old song happens to be a hymn, the problem may be harder to solve.

That's where Bob Steel comes in.

As the operator of two bookstores that specialize in old religious books, he relishes such problems.

Mr. Steel's stores—one in Davenport, Iowa, another in Kansas City, Mo.—are filled with libraries of retired pastors. He trucks books in from other states—the contents of 20 to 30 libraries a year, he said—and sells them to a ready market: other pastors, students of seminaries and Bible colleges.

Mr. Steel said he got into the used-book business accidentally. For 13 years, he operated a traditional Christian bookstore in Davenport. But then six years ago, his father-in-law, an American Baptist pastor, decided it was time to unload his library.

Mr. Steel added the used books to his stock and found the section growing as ministers in the area asked to trade used books for new ones.

Since then, he's acquired thousands of used religious books.

Mr. Steel estimates he has 15,000 used titles in Davenport and another 45,000 or so in his recently opened Kansas City store, which he expects to feed a ready market of students from the many Bible colleges and seminaries in the area.

Both sellers and buyers have learned about his stores by word of mouth or through his catalogues.

"It's an intriguing market," said Steel, who does no advertising. "It's not predictable. You never know what you're going to get and what you're going to sell."

Sometimes Mr. Steel finds treasures—books from the 1700s, first editions, or, autographed copies. He once had a book autographed by Helen Keller.

Dear Deborah
Family conference helps overcome conflicts

Dear Deborah:

In response to "loving mom," another approach.

When my husband and I began adopting children of different races and nationalities, we knew there would be challenges ahead. With five children there were many.

It took us some years to learn that a good method of handling problems, such as prejudice and the comments of unkind children as well as thoughtless adults, was a family conference. Discuss the episode with everyone and ask them what they want to do.

Soon everyone entered in and it worked surprisingly well.

The first response would usually be "beat 'em up!" We would add "well, that's one way. What else?" They usually had numerous suggestions but selected a more rational and mature approach than beating up the offending person(s). (Ages ranged 10 years from the youngest to oldest).

Most important was the feeling of control the children developed over what happened. Often I was angry as well. Talking about how it made us feel helped settle those feelings and let us all know it was okay to be mad.

My husband and I worked closely with the schools and churches so that they would be aware of existing problems.

Our children are 23-33 now, and bigotry still exists. It is up to all of us to do our part to overcome it. There is much work yet to be done.

"Been there," Pammie

Dear Pammie:

Thanks for making my day! What a wonderful testimony to share with my readers. You have given us an example of good parenting and a way for all families to deal with all the problems youngsters face growing up today.

You have also done a lot to help churches understand that a lot more has to be done and to understand that it is local congregations are where the need is.

I believe your family conferences are also a good place to discuss theology (in lay language, of course) and what we believe about the way God wants Christians to respond to these situations.

You also have taught your children that having self-esteem means one does not have to react instantly but can take time to talk it over and decide rationally, hopefully on the basis of one's true values.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Poem of the Week

TAKE-OFF

We taxi down the runway,
Puttering our life along,
till sudden urge impels us to start rushing.
We run at life;
And finally, by ultimate exertion,
We leave the earth.
Roaring into the sky
Until we level off,
Secure and gliding peacefully,
Upheld by the wings of God.
—EDITH E. CUTTING

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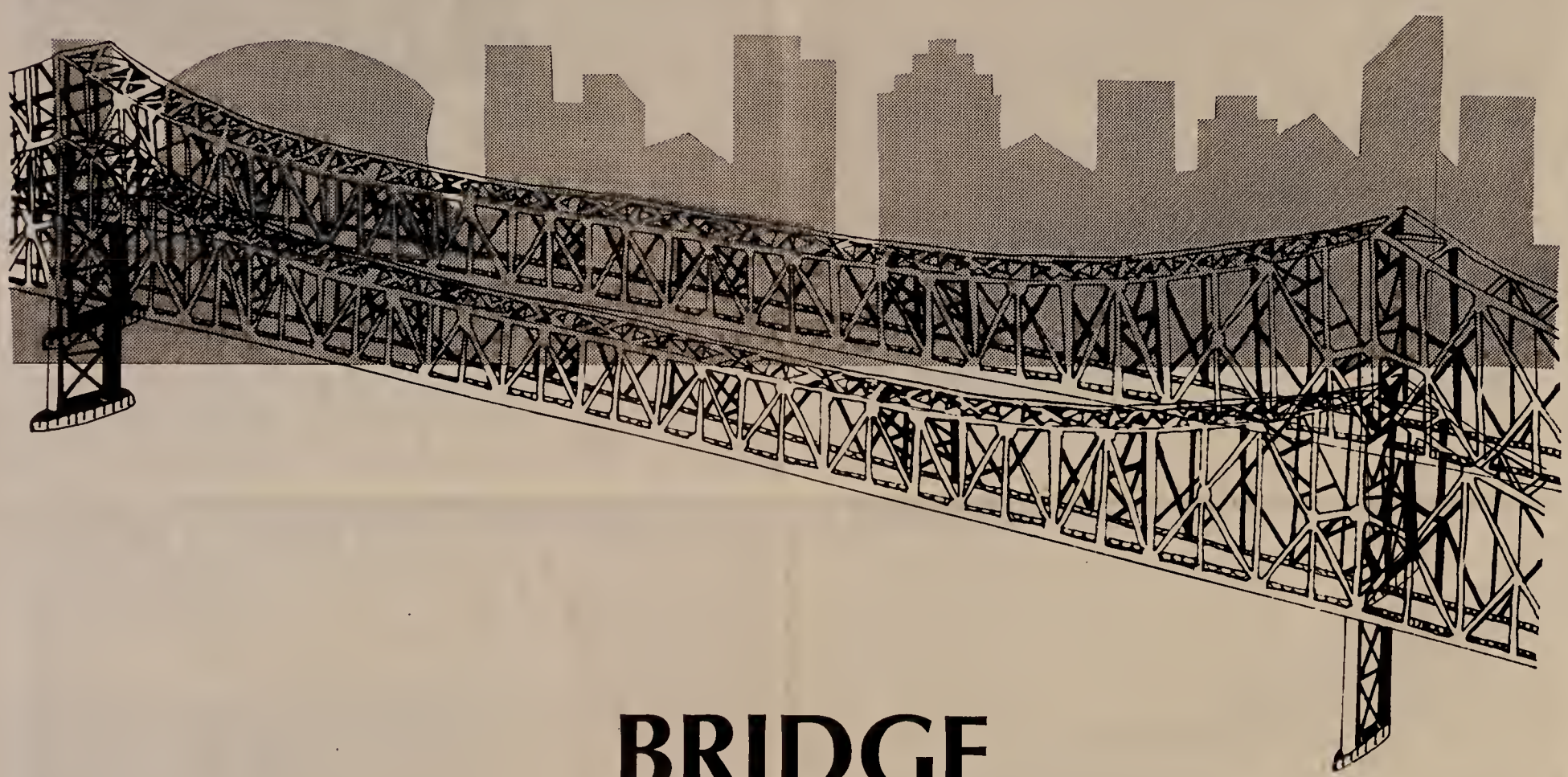

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— Labor Day — An Opportunity to Celebrate and to Reflect

This week's column is written by the Reverend Roger D. Lathan, Associate Director, Conference Council on Ministries and Director of Special Ministries for the Conference.

In a day in which our working lives dominate so much of our waking hours, many people have come to experience work as drudgery. Labor Day for these persons has ceased to be a celebration and has become merely a welcome day off in which the goal is to forget about labor.

W. David Sapp in a meditation entitled "Daily Work and the Christian" suggests, "Labor Day is an opportunity to celebrate and to reflect on the meaning of the work we do day after day." Mr. Sapp makes three basic points to support his statement.

1. **Work is a means by which we can love our neighbor as ourselves.**

No matter how trivial our task may seem, any worthwhile work helps to sustain other people. Whether growing food, building buildings, assembling cars, caring for the sick or typing letters, we engage in activities which enhance the lives of others.

2. **Work is a means by which we can be responsible to ourselves as God has created us.**

We normally see work as a means of obtaining material possessions. Indeed work often does make it possible for us to acquire material essentials and sometimes luxuries. But work has personal benefits other than earning money. Leisure, for example, when experienced as relief from our labor, becomes a time to celebrate with God the goodness of life and to experience the joy of rest.

3. **Work allows us to participate with God in God's activity.**

We can only be content when our work is an arena where God's call to discipleship is lived out. In all kinds of vocations, people are still living out God's call to subdue the earth and have dominion over it as responsible stewards, but also to love God and neighbor in all that we do.

This Labor Day let us celebrate and contemplate the meaning of work in our lives.

Roger D. Lathan

Kenneth L. Schwab Named 34th President of Centenary College

An award-winning educator with a keen interest in leadership and strategic planning has been named Centenary College's 34th President.

Elected unanimously by the Board of Trustees, Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab takes the reigns of the 166-year-old Methodist college from Dr. Donald A. Webb, who announced his retirement in December of last year.

Dr. Schwab comes to Centenary from the University of South Carolina where he was Executive Vice President for Administration and Associate Professor of Education in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policies. As Executive Vice President, he served as the President's Chief of Staff, coordinating the activities of facilities planning, institutional planning and research, law enforcement and safety, personnel, student services and the international center. He has also been involved with development, alumni affairs and university relations. He has taught graduate courses in leadership in higher education and institutional planning and research, and is credited with the establishment of a strategic plan for the total University system.

Prior to that, Dr. Schwab served 16 years at Guilford College, a private college in Greensboro, N.C., where he worked as Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Students, and Assistant to the President for Institutional Planning and Community Relations. As Associate Professor of Education, he taught courses in educational psychology, interdisciplinary studies and psychology of exceptional children.

Dr. Schwab holds the Doctor of Education degree (1978) from Indiana University, Master of Education degree (1972) from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro and the Bachelor of Science degree (1969) from Purdue University, where he graduated with honors as the 1969 Outstanding Senior.

He has done post-graduate studies at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, Johns Hopkins University and Harvard University. He was awarded an American Council on Education Fellowship in Academic Administration.

An active United Methodist in one of South Carolina's largest United Methodist Churches, Dr. Schwab has served on the Council of Ministries since 1988. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce Board; the Wellness Council of the Midlands of South Carolina; the Committee of One Hundred; the Business Digest Educational Advisory Board; Columbia Development Corporation; and the Board of Trustees, Cities in Schools.

Professional memberships include the American Council on Education, the American Association of Higher Education, the South Carolina Association of Institutional Research and the Association for Institutional Research.

Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab,
President, Centenary College

Dr. Schwab and his wife, Pat, who also has a doctorate in education, are the parents of three sons: Kempten, Carlton and Christopher.

New President, Centenary College Leaders' Plan to Shape College Year

A new President, Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab, and an innovative plan for student voluntarism, off-campus study and career counseling will shape the 1991-92 academic year at Centenary College as one of the most exciting in recent times.

At the helm of the 166-year-old liberal arts college will be Dr. Kenneth Schwab, an award-winning educator with a keen interest in leadership and strategic planning. He took office Wednesday, Aug. 7, as the College's 34th President.

The Centenary Plan, optional for freshmen entering this year and required for students entering in the fall of 1992 and thereafter, is a three-pronged program to add richness and new dimensions to the Centenary experience.

All students will be involved in at least one approved community service project over their four years. Affiliated with the United Methodist Church, college leaders believe that students have an obligation to give back to society, and in so doing, they improve themselves.

All students will have at least one experience in living and learning in a different culture. Centenary leaders believe that it is very important to live and learn in a culture other than our own. For some students, that will be the London School of Economics or Moscow University. For others, it may be traveling to an Amish Community or an Indian Pueblo.

All students in their sophomore year will be involved in an assessment program which will help guide their career decisions. Students who desire it will have an opportunity to do an internship in their junior or senior years. Since the Centenary administration believes that meaningful work is a significant part of life, it is affirming that a liberal arts education can prepare students for a variety of careers.

Centenary College is a four-year, independent, liberal arts college for men and women.

It aspires to be one of the best small colleges in the South. The special mission will be to earn a national reputation for attaining extraordinary levels of academic performance from Centenary's students.

For more information, please call the Office of Public Relations, 318/869-5103, or the Office of Admissions, 318/869-5131 or 800-234-4448.

September Conference Calendar

6-7	United Methodist Women Training Session for Conference Deans and Assistant Deans, Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville
10	Conference Council on Finance & Administration, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.
11-12	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
13	Full Board of Discipleship, First Church, Pineville, 10:30 a.m.
13-14	District Education Visioning, Tall Timbers
15	Retired Ministers Homes Sunday
19	United Methodist Women Executive Committee Meeting, Henning Memorial Church, Sulphur
19	CCYM, First Church, Pineville, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
19	Camp Istrouma Board Meeting, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.
20	Louisiana United Methodist Men's Executive Committee, Baton Rouge
20	Mentor Training for Diaconal Ministers, University Church, Baton Rouge, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
20-21	United Methodist Women Annual Meeting, Henning Memorial Church, Sulphur
22-23	Shepherd's Visit — Baton Rouge District
24-25	Church Growth with Integrity Seminar, Sponsored by Perkins School of Theology, Broadmoor Church, Shreveport
24-28	Workshop on Conflict Management sponsored by Board of Discipleship
28	CCYM Fall Convocation, Louisiana College, Pineville
29-30	Shepherd's Visit — Acadiana District

First Half Year Giving Shows Close Parallel To Last Year

A report such as the following is always encouraging as it shows how United Methodist people work together for the larger mission and ministry of Christ.

The Book Of **Discipline** in paragraph #715 states, and I paraphrase, the local church treasurers shall **remit monthly** to the conference treasurer all amounts contributed to each local church for World Service and Conference Benevolences and all other funds authorized for General, Jurisdictional, Annual Conference and District causes.

Then in the same manner the Conference Treasurer is mandated to **remit monthly** all such funds received during the month for each of these causes.

We as Local Church Treasurers and Conference Treasurer consider this directive a sacred obligation and privilege. I want to express my appreciation to all local church officials who support and encourage their treasurer in faithfully keeping such an important trust.

Remittances to the Conference Treasurer through the end of June 1991 indicate apportionments are running about .36 of one percent behind last year although the dollar amount is slightly higher. Giving to non-apportioned special causes is up slightly with some significant ups and downs on specific items.

The people and programs we have pledged to support are dependent on our combined effort. The days ahead are obviously critical to the support of the work and ministry of Christ's Church through the Louisiana Conference.

Stone Caraway,
Treasurer

Fund Name	1990 Apportionment	Year-To-Date Receipts June 30, 1990	Percent Paid Yr.-To-Date	1991 Apportionment	Year-To-Date Receipts June 30, 1991	Percent Paid Yr.-To-Date
World Service	1,264,485	537,283.48	42.49%	1,281,105	516,756.59	40.34%
Ministerial Education Fund	313,859	120,145.78	38.28%	325,277	125,548.47	38.60%
Black College Fund	138,375	53,364.06	38.56%	140,123	52,238.50	37.28%
Africa Fund	73,217	29,121.69	39.77%	73,062	27,576.14	37.74%
SCJ Sem Fund	50,128	20,767.91	41.43%	50,036	20,920.12	41.81%
Lydia Patterson Fund	38,116	15,411.73	40.43%	39,527	16,758.34	42.40%
Gulfside	10,038	4,565.81	45.49%	10,011	4,517.44	45.12%
Centenary Fund	561,539	184,553.16	32.87%	570,492	187,350.87	32.84%
Wesley Fund	551,624	167,261.43	30.32%	560,490	178,284.60	31.81%
Dillard University	62,171	23,098.63	37.15%	64,046	22,564.41	35.23%
La Interch Fund	29,066	11,282.21	38.82%	30,032	12,146.33	40.44%
Interdenominational Fund	21,068	8,113.50	38.51%	21,022	8,394.20	39.93%
General Adm Fund	56,143	21,784.42	38.80%	58,046	23,201.07	39.97%
Jud Adm Fund	30,090	11,402.03	37.89%	31,035	13,084.54	42.16%
La Conf Adm	501,379	185,444.12	36.99%	525,462	188,565.45	35.89%
Pension (Dec)	726,977	312,031.76	42.92%	750,647	322,842.37	43.01%
D S Fund	645,782	269,311.37	41.70%	675,588	282,549.77	41.82%
Episcopal Fund	135,368	63,313.40	46.77%	168,151	80,401.84	47.82%
Equitable Salary	60,162	29,500.19	49.03%	60,056	28,898.41	48.12%
TOTAL APPORTIONMENTS	5,269.587	2,067,756.68	39.24%	5,434,208	2,112,599.46	38.88%
NON-APPORTIONED ITEMS						
General Advance Special		38,413.37			48,241.83	
Youth Service		3,762.07			4,057.48	
Human Relations Fund		6,411.66			5,584.75	
One Great Hour		33,125.68			22,318.29	
Peace/Justice		1,062.46			2,207.69	
Native American Fund		2,544.14			5,788.84	
World Com Fund		353.00			593.50	
Student Day		974.50			808.70	
Christian Education Sunday		152.00			194.00	
Conference Advance Special		12,368.47			11,662.21	
Good Sam/Health & Welfare		122,951.86			113,057.06	
Min Emerg Fund		4,115.56			3,189.22	
TOTAL NON-APPORTIONED ITEMS		226,234.77			217,703.57	
GRAND TOTAL		2,293,991.45			2,330,303.03	

WMA Communion Ware Gift to Conference

Louisiana delegates to the World Methodist Assembly held July 24-29 in Singapore returned with a special gift for the Louisiana Annual Conference.

A pewter chalice and communion paten, one of the eighteen sets of communion ware used in the opening worship service of the World Conference, was purchased by these United Methodists in honor of Louisiana United Methodism.

This communion service was designed and created for the World Methodist Assembly by the Singapore Methodist community. A replica of the commemorative metal cast specifically for the Conference is embedded in each of the pewter pieces.

Bishop William B. Oden, who received the gift in the name of Louisiana's Annual Conference, says that the communion set will be used in the opening worship service in the 1992 Annual Conference session.

Louisiana delegates Dr. Stone Caraway, Dr. George Calvin Sr. and Dr. Sarah S. Kreutziger (l. to r.) are shown presenting the pewter chalice and communion paten to Bishop Oden (second from right).

Editorial

'Why to' reply to 'how to' book

All interest in death is only another expression of interest in life.
—Thomas Mann

This insight by a noted German writer helps explain why a how-to book on suicide is a best-seller and why that should be a matter of concern to Christians.

The book, "Final Exit" by Derek Humphrey, has been severely criticized for giving detailed instructions on ways to kill oneself.

According to "The New York Times," experts fear it will be misused by people who are depressed, criminally inclined, or seeking a "quick fix" for terminal illness—their own or that of a loved one.

We believe such concerns are valid on moral and spiritual grounds.

The moral concern is the more obvious. Availability in bookstores of a how-to suicide manual tacitly encourages an act that is, at best, morally ambiguous and in most instances morally repugnant.

As such, the book bypasses the agonizing debate among theologians, ethicists, physicians and others on the question: Is it ever morally acceptable to end a human life, one's own or that of others, however humane the reasons and means?

Compassion requires us as Christians to withhold condemnation and to deal lovingly with individuals and families facing such excruciating circumstances.

In the absence new revelation, however, Christians should turn to and uphold the wisdom of another book when faced with life-and-death decisions. The witness of Scripture is clear: Thou shalt not kill.

On a spiritual level, however, Thomas Mann's perceptive point raises a probing question:

Might widespread interest in a book about suicide signal the prevalence of a yearning for deeper fulfillment and meaning in life?

One example, the vitality of the hospice movement, suggests indirectly at least that the answer is "yes" (see related articles elsewhere in this issue).

Through the love and community of hospice care, people facing terminal illness and loved ones caring for them in their final weeks or months have discovered that life can be rich and meaningful even in the midst of suffering and dying.

In other words, given a choice between living and dying, most people will choose to live if there is a purpose for doing so, particularly if that purpose is to give love and receive the love of others.

Viewed in that light, the popularity of a book about suicide provides a highly relevant and profound challenge to us as Christ's followers to proclaim God's good news and to make the case for life.

The Bible's message has weathered the test of time and is likely to be teaching people how to live and die under God's care long after a "how to" manual on suicide is forgotten.

Particularly when life's trials tempt one to opt for dying, we should point people to that "why to" guide for living.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

MINNEAPOLIS—With the help of the Methodist Hospital Hospice Program, Maxine Hoepner cares for her husband Roger at home. The vitality of the hospice movement shows that life can be rich and meaningful even in the midst of suffering and dying.

My Witness

Being a 'new patch' means not knowing 'WNDITWB'

By BRIDGET E. SNEBOLD

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Bridget E. Snebold is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Brackenridge, Pa. (Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

I remember my first official duty in my church. Several years ago, my pastor asked me to head a brand-new committee whose purpose was to celebrate the Bicentennial of The United Methodist Church.

Up to that point I had been a "Christmas and Easter" worshiper with some extra points thrown in for the baptism of my children and an occasional wedding and funeral.

However, my pastor, I believed at the time, saw some greater "aura" around me and I was called to serve in this all-important once-in-a-lifetime work area.

Now, with hindsight and several years of serving on a nominations committee, I have re-defined this heady opinion of myself and see it for what it probably was: a *"we've never asked her to serve before"* kind of request.

I proceeded in my "church innocence" to break all the rules and to stretch the wineskin of this church to the limit. I was the new "patch" the "unshrunk cloth." I didn't know that WNDITWB (We Never Did It This Way Before).

I planned several "new" activities that stretched all the rules, culminating in a 200th anniversary worship service with *most* of the congregation arriving in early American costumes (remember, some of us "had never done it that way before").

Our choir was fully costumed. We made special bonnets for all the children. Our ushers collected a record-breaking offering with six-foot, handled baskets specially made for the occasion.

Our pastor, a bald-headed, kind and gentle soul who never had the heart to inform me of the WNDITWB rules, wore a heavy wig and a hot, scratchy wool costume which I specially rented along with many others for the occasion.

I take no credit for the success of the events. I was simply a new patch. It wasn't until later when I became very involved in the inner workings of the church that I too began to "fit" the old wineskin.

I began to shrink and why, I even hear myself beginning to say to others "WNDITWB."

Jesus Christ never served on a committee. He never learned to "fit the wineskin." Instead, the days of "patching" were over. He constructed a whole new wineskin and gave it His name: The Christian Church.

At the Resurrection he completely burst the old wineskin apart.

Now He allows each of us the opportunity to serve Him and to be able to say to anyone: "Christ always did it this way before."

Letters to the Editor

Anger and blame may be fitting responses

So the United Methodist Church is helping to ease "anger and blame in Milwaukee" (see UMR, Aug. 9). Why?

In light of ever-increasing police expenditures, the only proper reaction to an incident where a naked bleeding victim is turned over to his attacker is anger and blame.

I would also add punishment to the list acceptable responses.

It is a pity that Americans have such short memories. After Elliot Ness and the "untouchables" successfully prosecuted Al Capone they went to Milwaukee to prosecute corrupt officials there. The corruption was so pervasive that they gave up and left town.

The Dahmer story is just one example of police indifference to their duties that exists across America.

Maybe it is about time we got angry and started blaming people.

Robert Underwood
Springfield, Massachusetts

Why do members leave?

The July 26 editorial headlined, "We should take losses personally," epitomizes the pejorative attitude our church has towards those who are outside the church, or worse still, leave this denomination.

Using the image of a "photograph of a suffering sister or brother" to evoke a sense of compassion blinds us to the reality that those who leave this church are not necessarily suffering.

How parental to presume to know both the reason for their leaving and that we are the sole proprietors of "meaning and spiritual fulfillment in life!"

There are so many competent scholars who have pointed out that absent church members are not simply lost sheep who have wandered away, but instead are often persons who consciously leave for very good reasons: needs unmet, a sense of ineffectiveness or irrelevance of the church, the offensiveness of some of our language, liturgy and theology, and our inability to empathize with or communicate in these "times," as you reference in Matthew 16:3.

Most importantly, they grow tired as I have grown tired of the church's defensive whining about losing members instead of asking the obvious question: Why?

We have not honestly, painfully, thoroughly asked that, because if we acknowledged, understood, and acted upon the answers, we would change. And then I believe the world would begin to change because we would finally have the focus in the right place: not on conserving our denomination, but on welcoming the kingdom into our midst.

Gary M. Keene
Billings, Montana

Worshipping in parks

Regarding your Aug. 2 editorial headlined, "Is God in your vacation?":

For the past 10 winters I have done volunteer office work for National Park Service in Death Valley National Monument, and have felt blessed by attendance at Sunday worship services in this remote and beautiful desert.

An organization known as Christian Ministry in the National Parks has provided worship leaders in Death Valley each year.

Because Death Valley, Calif., is warm in the winter, many senior citizens stay the 30-day limit in the campgrounds. Many employees of Park Service and concessions live in Death Valley.

Sunday services are 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m in the 400-seat indoor National Park Service auditorium and are well attended. On Wednesday evening there is Bible study in the administrative building. A children's class meets once a week. On Easter Sunday there is a sunrise service on the sand dunes.

Young people who have come to minister at Death Valley have been mostly couples and have been from different denominations. Their presence has been appreciated by many.

Times and places of worship are available at the information desk in the visitor center of most national parks.

Marjorie D. Elvin
Elgin, Illinois

What is biblical literacy?

Praise the Lord! Eleanor Finkbeiner found the words to raise the charge of biblical illiteracy in the United Methodist Church (see UMR, July 19)!

This is a concern near my heart and in my prayers. Literacy starts with making the habit of using the Bible regularly in childhood.

The next installment concerning this charge should address the definition of literacy: Quoting verses? Using Bibles in children's classes? Reading passages critically?

Interpreting passages? Using a concordance to find and integrate related material? Patterning actions after the guidelines in the Bible? Integrating services around specific passages?

All the above? Or more?

Phyllis Cashman
Reeds Spring, Missouri

Thanks for letter

This is just a short note of thanks for printing Ronald Stelzleni's letter in the July 19 Reporter.

Many of us agree wholeheartedly that the National Council of Church's theology is bankrupt and has no place with any true Christian group.

Barry Winnick
Fort Worth, Texas

Pontius' Puddle

What others are saying

"A Christian is one who encounters Christ wherever one looks, and this gives one joy and to the world, life."
—The Rev. John Chryssavgis, Russian Orthodox Church in Australia.

* * *

"Hatred, violence and repression are the seeds of disaster. Our Christian faith has a unique response of reconciliation to offer the world."
—Bishop M. Stanley Mogoba, presiding bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

* * *

"Once the legal barriers are removed, one has to deal with the more subtle levels of discrimination that are enculturated in all of us. The lay women are more aware of the struggle than clergy women. Maybe that says more about clericalism than anything else."
—Pamela Pauly Chinnis, newly elected president of the House of Deputies, Episcopal Church.

Here I Stand

Offering to heal Nicaragua war wounds merits support

By PAUL JEFFREY

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Paul Jeffrey serves as a United Methodist missionary to the Nicaraguan Council of Evangelical Churches. Mr. Jeffrey is a ministerial member of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference.

During the last decade, the U.S. government used our money without our permission to destroy Nicaragua.

Today, our church is asking to use our money, with our permission, to help rebuild Nicaragua.

The country where I serve as a missionary has been left devastated by what Pentagon planners euphemistically call "low-intensity war."

According to a study done for the International Court of Justice—which in 1986 found the U.S. guilty of violating 15 counts of international law in its aggression against Nicaragua—the war cost Nicaragua over $17 billion in damages.

Over 30,000 killed

In addition, over 30,000 Nicaraguans were killed and 20,000 injured. Many of the latter were left disabled, missing part of their body or their mind. The resources just don't exist in post-war Nicaragua to help these sisters and brothers.

To assist in in the reconstruction of Nicaragua, the General Board of Global Ministries has approved Advance Special #115486, "Rehabilitation of War Victims."

All of the money raised for this special offering will help the Nicaraguan Foundation for War Victims provide therapy, rehabilitation, and job training to people disabled by the war, regardless of their ideological background.

It is a cause that all of us can get behind, no matter what our feelings about the rightness or wrongness of U.S. policy toward Nicaragua during the last decade.

Whether we supported or opposed the contras, today we can get behind this effort to heal some of the wounds inflicted by the contra war.

This Advance Special offers our congregations an opportunity not only to raise funds for a good cause, but also serves as a reminder and as a sign to us.

Actions have consequences

It reminds us that our actions have consequences, that our wars have victims, despite the concerted effort of our government earlier this year to convince us that war can be fought without victims.

This Advance Special also can serve us as a sign that God calls us to repentance from our complicity with sin and terror. As we embrace the pain of those who suffer as a result of our actions, it calls for our conversion from death to life, from the worship of power to the practice of justice.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: 1 Timothy 6:6,7)

Readings for week of Sept. 2

Monday: Psalms 121
Tuesday: Psalms 123
Wednesday: 1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-12
Thursday: Mark 7:1-8
Friday: Mark 7:14-15, 21-23
Saturday: Ephesians 6:10-17
Sunday: Ephesians 6:18-20

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Faith watch

RUDE AWAKENING? Bishop C. Dale White (New York Area) told participants at the United Methodist Women's Division National Seminar in Columbus, Ohio, last week that an economy based on military production was the cause of fiscal problems that led to the ousting of Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev. The bishop added, "Americans who think U.S. corporations that produce weapons will pack their bags and go away because the Cold War has ended are in for a rude awakening." He said militarism fuels national economies around the world, so working against militarism must be part of the Christian commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

BIBLES IN MOSCOW: The United Bible Societies, whose financial support system includes United Methodists, reports that Bible Society personnel distributed more than 6,000 New Testaments to Soviet soldiers at the height of tension during last week's failed coup attempt. One group of Christians in a mini-bus distributed 4,500 New Testaments to troops who had sealed off Red Square.

EXECUTIVE TO LEAVE: S. David Stoner, executive director of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) executive agency, the General Assembly Council, says he does not intend to seek another term after his current term ends Dec. 31. He said the five years of his leadership have been "a tumultuous time, but it has also been a spiritual journey filled with love and hope."

LUTHERANS RUN GAMUT: Policy statements on abortion, capital punishment and ecumenism top the agenda of the second Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting Aug. 28-Sept. 4 in Orlando, Fla. But sexuality—which dominated summer gatherings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Episcopal Church—has been deferred to 1993 by the Lutherans while their church contemplates a study document.

INDIANS' LOGO IS ASSAILED: The Chief Wahoo logo of the Cleveland Indians is under all-out assault from national offices of the 1.6-million-member United Church of Christ, the denomination that traces its roots to the Pilgrims. Denominational officials are attempting to convince Indians management to get rid of the Chief Wahoo logo, contending that the grinning, toothy caricature is insulting to Native Americans. Considerable furor has followed announcement of the church's stand.

CHURCH SEEKS CATHOLIC TIE: Members at St. Mary the Virgin Episcopal Church, a traditionalist congregation of 150 people in Arlington, Texas, recently voted to leave the denomination and seek affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, prompted by disappointment in actions taken at the Episcopal Church's recent General Convention in Phoenix. Other Episcopalian congregations have left the denomination, but the request to align with the Roman Catholic Church instead of conservative Episcopalians is unusual.

CHARISMATICS GATHER: About 4,500 persons attending the 20th International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit recently heard a call for renewed emphasis on using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues. Most activity was held on the new Arden Hills, Minn., campus of North Heights Lutheran Church, generally regarded as the "flagship" congregation of the Lutheran charismatic movement, according to the Rev. Larry Christenson, conference co-chair and an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America pastor.

Amid chaos of failed Soviet coup, Estonian pastor affirms church

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Upheaval in the U.S.S.R. hasn't dimmed the opportunity for Christian outreach to Eastern Europe.

That encouraging word came last week from an Estonian United Methodist pastor amidst the chaos of the failed Soviet coup.

The Rev. Ullas Tankler of Parnu, Estonia; his wife, Meeli, and their children, Allar, 10, Lauri, 8, and Liina, 7, were in the U.S. to introduce United Methodists to an exciting project—construction of the first new United Methodist church buildings in the Soviet Union.

Surprised by takeover

As they neared the end of their month-long stay, Mr. Tankler admitted he was as surprised by the timing of the Soviet takeover as were most Americans he came to visit.

When they talked with the Reporter last week, the Tanklers had been unable to telephone family and friends in Estonia for two days.

They found the silence ominous.

"There is a certain fear in us," Mr. Tankler acknowledged. "Every person [in Estonia] is affected by the central Soviet situation. It is a life or death situation."

The apprehension springs from the history of Soviet oppression of the Baltic republic of Estonia and from recent attempts to halt Estonia's drive for independence, he continued. Estonians had declared sovereignty in March 1990. And only one day before the Tanklers talked with the Reporter, their nation's parliament voted 69-0 to declare independence from the Soviet Union.

Estonia, separated from Finland by a 50-mile-wide neck of the Baltic Sea at one point, has a population of about 1.6 million. Its natural resources include an estimated 70 percent of the Soviet Union's oil shale.

'Our parents told us'

"Estonia was an independent country from 1920 to 1940" when it was annexed by Moscow, Mr. Tankler explained. "Although the state-run schools tried to wipe out that history, our parents told us about it, and we believed them."

Soviet oppression under Stalin nearly wiped out the Methodist church in Estonia, where it has existed since 1907. One courageous superintendent, who refused to close the churches, was sent to Siberia for his defiance, Mr. Tankler said.

"It was a miracle the church survived," he asserted.

Hard-line Soviet tactics in the past—ones that last week the Tanklers feared might be employed again—have involved the closing and/or confiscation of church buildlings and restrictions on outreach such as youth work, Mr. Tankler explained.

Should hard-liners ever take over the Soviet government, Estonian United Methodists could conceivably be threatened.

"In Estonia, we don't need such a crisis [as the Soviet coup] for learning democracy. Our people have had democracy and freedom of opinion. What we need is to get back to a normal society."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN A. LOVELACE

DALLAS—Estonian United Methodist pastor Ullas Tankler; his wife, Meeli, and and son Allar, 10, eagerly read news reports of the failed coup in the Soviet Union. They were in the U.S. to help raise funds for construction of the denomination's first new buildings in the Soviet Union.

"Normal society" in Estonia has been recurring since 1987, when the "perestroika" (restructuring) and "glasnost" (openness) policies of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev lifted restrictions on the practice of religion in Estonia, Mr. Tankler said.

In such an atmosphere, relations between United Methodists and government officials have warmed considerably.

'We make ourselves felt'

"Although our church in Parnu has only 75 members, we make ourselves felt in the society," Mr. Tankler said. "It isn't that we are better than anyone else or that we've tried to be concerned just with our own affairs. All [aspects of Estonian society] concerns us, and we have tried to be partners in the discussions."

Two striking examples mark the cooperation between church and state in Estonia.

The United Methodist parsonage in Parnu is next door to the city hall. Mr. Tankler receives facsimile messages from the U.S. and from his bishop, Hans Vaxby (Northern Europe Area), via the city hall facsimile machine.

In addition, the land on which Parnu United Methodists seek to build their new sanctuary, social hall and children's center was given to the congregation by the city council. It lies in the growing western section of Parnu where there are no churches.

These examples—and countless other smaller ones—leave Mr. Tankler convinced that United Methodists must not let opportunity slip past.

"There is an immense opportunity now for us as Christians to work in Estonia," Mr. Tankler asserted.

'Openness will go away'

"People are very open right now. Soon many political and economic pressures will come and this openness will go away.

"We must use the opportunity to establish the beginnings of different kinds of ministries that will bear much fruit."

Contributions for construction of the Parnu United Methodist Church may be sent via annual conference treasurers to **Advance Special No. 115362AN.**

In acknowledgement of the unsettled state of the Soviet Union, the contributions will be kept on deposit with Bishop Vaxby in Helsinki, Finland, and withdrawn by the Parnu church as expenses arise.

4 more years' baptism study recommended

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

MINNEAPOLIS—The committee studying the United Methodist understanding of baptism will not submit legislation to the church's policymaking 1992 General Conference.

Instead, the committee last week unanimously agreed to recommend that "By Water and the Spirit," the document they developed over the last four years, should be studied for four more years at the local church level before any legislative changes are suggested.

The study, initiated by the 1988 General Conference, has unearthed divisions so deep within the denomination regarding the meaning of baptism that apparently they cannot be resolved in one four-year period.

Nevertheless, the committee has tried to breach the gap.

The gap is created, at least in part, by tension in Methodism's heritage between the sacramental theology teachings of the Anglican tradition, which emphasizes the initiating grace of God, and the evangelical tradition, which emphasizes human response to God's grace.

"We believe the genius of the paper is in its affirmation of the creative tension in our heritage," said committee chair the Rev. Mark Trotter of San Diego.

Correspondence from across the church reveals that people are especially concerned about two issues, he said.

Membership: Many are concerned about the proposal that baptism, even of infants, initiates one into membership in the church.

Confirmation: Many are mistakenly concerned that pastor-led classes for young people were to be eliminated.

Elimination of the classes is not proposed. In fact, the paper calls for a strengthening of the classes in a way that places more emphasis on "personal appropriation of the Christian faith, spiritual disciplines and discipleship."

Mark Trotter

The paper reads, "Persons baptized in infancy are ... expected to make a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and commit themselves to responsible discipleship. This moment now called confirmation should be interpreted as Profession of Faith Into Which We Were Baptized."

There should be special preparation for this moment, the proposal reads, but it is not specifically concerned with church membership.

"It should be emphasized that 'confirmation' is what the Holy Spirit does" in baptism, the paper says. Therefore a different name should be used for the service in which the person professes his or her faith.

Several other issues have prompted strong discussions.

Rebaptism: The paper has always stated that baptism is not repeatable.

However, services have been developed for individuals who express a desire for rebaptism after a particularly meaningful religious experience.

"A genius of this paper," said committee member the Rev. Jeanne Audry Powers, "is that (these) high religious moments of a person's life would have a way to be publicly affirmed and celebrated."

Infant dedication: The paper has always strongly discouraged infant dedication as a substitute for baptism.

"Dedication was not ordained by Christ in Scripture and is consequently a human rite that has been used by people as a substitute for that which Christ did ordain," said retired Bishop Ole Borgen. "Dedication is an act of disobedience."

However, a service of "Thanksgiving for the Birth or Adoption of a Child" is proposed in the committee's draft. This service would not be a substitute for baptism but would "point toward baptism."

Baptism, the paper says, "is a crucial threshold that we cross on our journey in faith. ... is at the heart of the Gospel of grace and is at the core of the church's mission. ... Baptism is an expression of God's love for the world, and the effects of baptism also express God's grace."

The committee proposes to petition the 1992 General Conference to remand the paper to the church's General Board of Discipleship for the denomination-wide study.

Further, the committee proposes that the United Methodist Publishing House publish the paper and an accompanying study guide for distribution to local congregations.

Women's seminar takes hard look at 'Mirrors of the Spirit'

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

COLUMBUS, Ohio—As a symbol of the wholeness of the earth, Rosa Williams (left) from Teaneck, N.J., and Darlene Marie Woods from Colorado Springs exchange small packets of dirt from their backyards. This was part of the emphasis on God's creation during the Women's Division National Seminar last week.

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBUS, Ohio—When you look into the mirror, what do you see—a beautiful reflection of the Holy Spirit or distortions from the vulnerabilities and frailties of humankind?

That question was asked of some 330 United Methodist women last week as they gazed into hand-held mirrors during "Mirrors of the Spirit: the 18th National Seminar of the Women's Division."

The meeting was held Aug. 18-25 at The Ohio State University in Columbus.

Daily worship, music, speakers, hour-long Bible study, workshops, plenaries, field trips and reflection groups focused on one or more of these issues: racism, militarism, the environment, children and women.

Ellen Kirby, an executive in the church's General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division, said the quadrennial meeting is intended to help leaders of United Methodist Women:

✓ Experience the unity of spirituality and social action;

✓ Ground themselves in biblical theological reflection and in United Methodist disciplines;

✓ Build organizing skills;

✓ Develop and share models to address distortions in the global-mirror such as racism, sexism, militarism and classism;

✓ Create a caring, supportive community.

During a day-long emphasis on "Come Holy Spirit—Reconcile Your People," the Rev. Linda H. Hollies let the women know that they were expected to take out their Bibles and meditate on her Gospel message as she said, "We are so often in the group because momma and grandmomma were United Methodist Women—but we have no discipline.

"We ... have been harvested by the Holy Spirit that we might be ready, willing and able to give birth to reconciliation in the church."

Ms. Hollies, pastor of Richards Street UMC in Joliet, Ill., added, "In every period of impending destruction, God has a habit of calling the women together, so that they might receive new instructions to bring reconciliation and new life, which comes to restore and revive and save the world."

During another morning Bible study on "Come Holy Spirit—Reconcile Your World," the Rev. Chung Hyun-Kyung of Seoul, Korea, told participants to look at the Bible as "a mirror of the spirit."

Dr. Chung is a theologian and professor at Ewha University in Seoul, the largest women's university in the world.

She said she has seen Christians read the scriptures in two ways:

■ From the perspective of the powerful, who control the world, who choose to justify themselves.

■ From the perspective of the victims, who know pain and what it means to be victimized.

In a third Bible study, under the theme, "Come Holy Spirit—Sustain Your Creation," Women's Division chief executive Joyce Sohl told the women:

"To be created in God's image means we are God's representatives to uphold the purpose of God in creation. We are not to trample or misuse (the earth) ... We are to have dominion as of God, as portrayed in Jesus as a servant."

Ressie Mae Bass of Miami, Fla., chairperson of the program planning committee, told the Reporter that the majority of seminar participants were selected by United Methodist Women in each of the church's 72 annual conferences. Each group of three included a UMW officer from the conference, district and local church levels.

Director of Enrollment Management

The Candler School of Theology, a professional school of Emory University and one of the thirteen official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, seeks to employ a Director of Enrollment Management. The Director of Enrollment Management will have responsibility for admissions, financial aid, and enrollment management and will report directly to the Dean.

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

CHARISMATICS MEET: Aldersgate '91 attracted more than 1,700 charismatic United Methodists to Chattanooga Aug. 15-18. Keynote speaker the Rev. **Robert Stamps** of Park Avenue United Methodist Church in Minneapolis said, "The most important contribution that our charismatic renewal has brought to the mainline church is the joyful worship of God, simply for God's sake." The national conference was sponsored by the United Methodist Renewal Services Fellowship.

HEADS NYMO: **Jamie Green**, a 17-year-old high school student from Topeka, Kan., has been elected chairperson of the United Methodist National Youth Ministry Organization (NYMO) Steering Committee. Elected vice-chairperson was **Paige Ponder**, 17, of Denton, Texas, and secretary, **Jeremy Vetter**, 15, North Platte, Neb.

ESCORTED TO SAFETY: United Methodist Bishop **Melvin G. Talbert** of San Francisco was part of a recent pan-Methodist consultation in Guatemala from which an international "escort" group may have helped save the life of Erick Villigran, one of Guatemala's leading church workers. After they learned of threats against Mr. Villigran's life, he and four others formed a group which took Mr. Villigran safely to the airport to leave the country. Mr. Villigran had been interrogated recently by Guatemalan officials about what they considered potentially subversive activities.

FILIPINOS MEET: Filipino American United Methodists met recently in Seattle for their third national convocation under the banner: "Forward with Faith and Grow in Witness." Delegates welcomed into the National Association of Filipino United Methodists (NAFAUM) the Filipino Methodist Church in Winnepeg, Canada, and approved a resolution encouraging the establishment of other churches in Canadian cities. A resolution asking that all Filipino American United Methodist churches observe "Mabuhay Sunday" once each year to promote the development of new congregations in several targeted cities was unanimously approved.

FLOOD RELIEF SOUGHT: The Amity Foundation in China, a Christian organization, is appealing for funds to assist victims of floods there in June and July. Because of tbe flooding, nearly half a million residents of Shouxian County—on the southern bank of the Huai River—are homeless. Another 2 million are homeless in the Yanchang and Huaiyin Prefectures in northern Jiangsu. Amity is trying to raise $1 million to build 10,000 or more shelters to protect homeless families during the winter. United Methodists can contribute through the United Methodist Committee on Relief, **Emergency Advance No. 982450**. Checks should be earmarked for "China floods."

What's it like to work with the dying?

Hospice workers discuss spirituality in care for terminally ill, those they love

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Do United Methodists believe in life after death?

Many people, including United Methodists, who work with terminally ill patients through hospice programs do so believe. Others do not.

Some 400 hospice wokers gathered in St. Paul recently to discuss the role of spirituality in hospice care of the terminally ill and those who love them.

Participants represented many faiths and no faith. Yet among most of them was a quiet, and sometimes not so quiet, certainty that there is indeed life afler death.

"I get the sense that (dying patients) are going to another reality," the Rev. William Hulme told his workshop participants, "and sometimes they can describe it."

Many participants, male and female, nodded vigorgously in agreement.

Dr. Hulme, a faculty member at Lutheran Northwestern Theological Seminary, continued by saying that those who die slowly seem to go in and out of that different reality.

As they near death, patients do a lot of drifting back and forth, agrees hospice nurse Patricia Kelley of Arlington, Va.

In her forthcoming book, "Final Gifts," she writes about her experiences with dying patients over the last 20 years and the experiences of other hospice nurses.

"Dying patients are telling us what it is like to die," Ms. Kelley told hospice workers in her "Final Messages of the Dying" workshop.

These messages may come when the patient seems to be "confused" or "out of it," she said.

"Nearing-death experiences" are similar to "near-death experiences" that are well documented, she said.

Hospice nurses have documented several common themes in the messages of those nearing death, Ms. Kelley continued.

Among common themes:

- Being in the presence of someone who is no longer alive or being in the presence of a religious figure;
- Preparing for travel;
- Wanting to go "home," even when the patient is at home;
- Seeing a place others can't see and describing it. "I can see the light down the road and it's beautiful," is a typical description, she said.

"We get a lot about how lovely it is," she said. "There is light, warmth, peace and love."

Articles describing these and other findings were published in "Nursing '86" and "Hospice," a publication of the National Hospice Organization.

Some participants at the St. Paul meeting, however, disagreed that any conculsions could be drawn from the behavior of dying patients.

Such conclusions would be suspect as a projection of the observer's own religious beliefs, said a participant.

One participant flatly stated that belief in life afler death was an excuse "not to do your grief work."

United Methodist hospice chaplain Edward J. Holland of Minneapolis said he thought that the overwhelming majority of hospice workers believe that there is another reality afler death.

However, he said, it is difficult to quantify the mystery of death.

"To take the time to confront that mystery is an awe-inspiring, sacred time—holy in its best sense," he said.

"It's indescribable. You know afterward that something significant has happened although it's hard to articulate it."

Affirming death as part of life

ST. PAUL—The hospice method of caring for the terminally ill has been sweeping across the United States since it was introduced into this country some 20 years ago.

Reportedly, hospice has broad support among United Methodists.

Hospice sources say hospice is a philosophy of providing compassionate care for people in the final phase of a terminal disease so that they can live as fully and comfortably as possible.

According to the National Hospice Organization, hospice:

- Affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;
- Neither hastens nor postpones death;
- Believes patients and families can prepare for a satisfactory and meaningful death through service of a caring community.

As often as possible, care is centered in the patient's home.

Family and friends are supported during the period of grief.

Entire family receives hospice workers' care

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

MINNEAPOLIS—Maxine Hoepner hadn't had a good night's sleep in seven months—since January, in fact, when her husband Roger, 67, learned he was dying of a rare form of cancer.

But with the help of the Methodist Hospital Hospice Program of Minneapolis and members of the Hoepners' congregation at Portland Avenue United Methodist Church, she has been caring for her husband at home.

That care involves getting up at all hours of the night to help meet his needs.

"Hospice is my lifeline. I couldn't make it without them," Mrs. Hoepner told a visitor as a blond young nurse took Mr. Hoepner's blood pressure and gently talked to him.

Care for whole famly

For the hospice nurse, Mrs. Hoepner's lack of rest is as much a concern as Mr. Hoepner's blood pressure. Before the nurse lefl the sunny, well-kept house, she said she would arrange for nighttime help for Mr. Hoepner so Mrs. Hoepner could get some sleep.

In hospice, the entire family is the concern of the medical team and hospice volunteers.

"Hospice," Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of "When Bad Things Happen to Good People," said recently "is the most exciting, gratifying development in health care in my lifetime."

The rabbi was speaking at the Aug. 14-17 meeting of the National Hospice Organization in St. Paul, Minn.

The theme "Hospice and Spirituality" attracted some 400 hospice workers—nurses, social workers, clergy and vounteers—of all faiths, including many United Methodists, from across the country.

"Even a life wracked with pain is a human life worth living because it is a life you can share with others," the rabbi told the group.

He knew from first hand experience, he said. When his 14-year-old son was so sick he had to sleep standing up, he still wanted to go on living.

Rabbi Kushner

"When he finally died, I realized how dreadful the difference was in having him there and suffering and not having him there at all."

Terminally ill people are not afraid of dying, the rabbi said. They are afraid of two things: pain and abandonment.

Hospice ministers to both concerns through pain management to keep the patient physically comfortable and through emotional and spiritual support to the patient and those who love them.

"It is care that provides respect and dignity for life in its final days," explained the Rev. Ed Holland. Mr. Holland, a United Methodist, is the manager of the Methodist Hospital Hospice Program in Minneapolis and was a coordinator of the recent national meeting.

Patients are not usually accepted into a hospice program unless they have been diagnosed as having six months or less to live, Mr. Holland told the Reporter.

He and others at the meeting said that the time a patient has left is very important.

During this time, patients and families learn to face the reality of death and prepare for it. Bereavement support begins when the patient first enters the program, he said.

On call 24 hours a day

Registered nurses are on call 24 hours a day, and other health care workers are called in as necessary.

There are charges for these services, but care is provided regardless of ability to pay, he said. Hospice obtains funds through donations, fundraisers, United Way, Medicare, insurance and welfare.

Volunteers are also an essential part of hospice, he said.

Whether professional or vounteer, Mr. Holland said, the most important thing a person can offer a dying patient is "really being there" for them.

"Genuine caring comes through loud and clear and contributes to the patient's and family's comfort and assurance," he said.

Is it depressing to work with death and dying every day? Hospice workers say it is not. Many say they have learned far more about living from their patients than they could have learned any other way.

The most important lesson, they say, is to savor every moment of life while you still have it.

Nevertheless, suffering is undeniably involved.

"It is torturous to watch the loved one going down, down, down," said seminary professor the Rev. William Hulme in his workshop "Suffering: the Common Bond of All Humanity."

"The humanizing experience of suffering can make it redemptive," he said. "Suffering can make you less judgemental, more compassionate, more accepting and more open to unconditional love."

UMCOR moves quickly in Hurricane Bob wake

By ANN WHITING

NEW BEDFORD, Mass.—A United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) disaster consultant was on the scene in coastal southeastern Massachusetts quickly after Hurricana Bob left a trail of destruction there last week.

The Rev. James Hundley of Richmond, Va., one of a dozen volunteer disaster response coordinators trained by UMCOR, was working with the Inter-Church Council of New Bedford to set up an ecumenical disaster response committee.

New England's southern coastline, from Newport, R.I., to Cape Cod, took a direct hit from the hurricane Aug. 19. Coastal flooding caused widespread evacuation of coastal areas, although most residents returned within hours.

Downed trees cut power and phone service to homes and businesses in coastal and inland areas. In some coastal and rural areas, power had yet to be restored by week's end.

Damage is obvious to summer homes and pleasure boats. But the Rev. John Douhan, New Bedford Inter-Church Council's acting executive minister, said he is more concerned about the "subtle disaster" experienced by residents in economically deprived areas and in insular ethnic communities in Massachusetts southeastern coastal communities. He believes many of their needs have not surfaced.

Part of UMCOR consultant Hundley's role is to help the ecumenical council assess those needs and coordinate volunteer response. Among possibilities being considered is training advocates to help persons apply for Federal Emergency Management Assistance aid if the state is declared a federal disaster area.

Mr. Hundley said UMCOR's role is to help ecumenical or interfaith agencies identify and meet needs not met by other agencies.

For example, in the New Bedford area, unemployment is believed to be at 25 percent. People without electrical service will not have it restored if there is an outstanding balance. UMCOR relief funds can be used to help pay those balances.

Downed trees cut power and phone service to homes and businesses in coastal and inland areas. In some power had yet to be restored by week's end.

Church funds can also be used to help an ecumenical agency hire a temporary staff person to coordinate the disaster response.

Mr. Hundley also pointed out that church relief agencies and local disaster response committees remain an active presence in long-term relief long after the Red Cross and other agencies are gone.

The United Methodist Southern New England Conference released nearly $5,000 from its disaster relief fund to southeastern Massachusetts. An offering for hurricane relief will be taken soon in the three annual conferences of the Boston Area.

Damage to United Methodist churches and other properties in southern New England appears light.

John Wesley UMC, Falmouth (on Cape Cod) lost part of a glass wall in the sanctuary behind the altar.

The Rev. Frances Swartz, Rhode Island-Southeastern Massachusetts district superintendent, rode out the hurricane on a small off-shore island where she had gone to preach and conduct a charge conference before it was clear how quickly the fast-moving storm would reach New England.

Ms. Whiting is editor of the Southern New England conference edition of the Reporter.

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PHOTO COURTESY PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

Bishop tosses a high, hard one

PHILADELPHIA—Philadelphia Area Bishop Susan Morrison throws out the ceremonial first pitch at a recent National League game between the Philadelphia Phillies and the Cincinnati Reds. The Phillies lost, but United Methodist youth ministries "won" to the tune of $7,894 raised through Phillies' rebates on tickets sold.

Church helps Bangladeshis recover

Natural disasters, subjugation of women among obstacles faced

By LINDA WORTHINGTON

The first question I'm asked about my recent trip to Bangladesh is about the cyclone.

I did not travel to that area. The dramatic damage from the cyclone and the 300,000 deaths were in the south of the country, on the Bay of Bengal.

I spent three days in the northwest, where the country is facing vast flooding.

In spite of the devastation of the rains, perhaps because such devastation is as sure as death and taxes, the Bangladeshi people are energetic, resilient and determined to make life better for themselves and their country's citizens.

Helping the homeless

One of many talented, dedicated, well-educated women and men I met working toward the economic development of their country was Mr. Adhakari, director of the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh. This is one of three church-based organizations that are partners with International Voluntary Services.

I presented a check to him for $12,000 to use in rebuilding the cyclone-destroyed houses of fishermen on a small island in the Bay of Bengal.

Mr. Adhakari explained that this money would build 325 traditional houses, using mostly local materials like bamboo, palm leaves and thatch.

Houses easily replaced

The houses would last two years and be easily replaced. If they should be blown over, they would likely not harm the residents because the materials are light and flexible, untrue of cement blocks or bricks which, in the devastating storms, would blow away as easily.

Each house costs $45 to build, using local labor and materials.

The house rebuilding is step one in the church's rehabilitation efforts with the cyclone victims. After the people have shelter, they need to have employment.

Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh is bringing a Church World Service boat-builder to Bangladesh to help the fishermen start building boats again. In the meantime they will be given the supplies and technical help to make new fishnets.

A third phase of this program will be to build large, stable cyclone shelters in which hundreds of people can be rescued during the brunt of the next typhoon or cyclone.

Change in status of women

Another great work of the church that I observed is with poor, neglected, destitute women.

I was first in Bangladesh just after independence in 1972. The whole country was devastated by its independence war with Pakistan.

At that time women were still in purdah, wearing the black veils over their faces, forbidden to be seen by men outside their homes.

This Muslim country still has much of that culture, but women have much more freedom than they did twenty years ago.

Their lot is hard

The lot of rural, village women is hard. International Voluntary Services, supported in part by a grant from the United Methodist Committee on Relief, works with hundreds of uneducated, poor women in the villages in the north.

I visited the training programs at places like Saidpur, Dinajpur, Rayong and Bogra. I saw the church at work in centers founded and begun by Bangladeshi women for "distressed women," widows, divorcees (a Muslim man can declare he's divorced and he is, with no responsibility for support of child or ex-wife), and single women. Without the support of a man they are truly destitute.

These centers train hundreds of poor village women in marketable skills: embroidery, weaving, jute weaving, bamboo products (like walls for the houses), rug-making (jute), and silk production.

They learn masonry skills that include making bricks, efficient stoves (hibachis), sanitary latrines (many whole villages do not have a single latrine), and to grow plants in nurseries.

After a few months of training, in some cases a year, in some cases as residents at a center where children are also given day care, the women can take their skills home and begin producing a product that can provide them an income.

But they gain much more. For the first time in their lives they can say, "I have value. I'm a worthwhile person."

For the first time ever they can provide for themselves and perhaps give back to the community. I found this a truly remarkable transformation in rural Bangladesh brought about in part from the support of the United Methodist Church.

Linda Worthington is executive director of International Voluntary Services, which has been working in developing countries for 38 years. International Voluntary Services has worked in rural development in Bangladesh for 18 years. The agency receives funding from the U.S. government, foundations, the United Methodist Church and other churches and from individuals. Ms. Worthington is also editor of the "Highlights" edition of The United Methodist Review for Chevy Chase (Md.) United Methodist Church.

PHOTO BY LINDA WORTHINGTON

A Bangladeshi farmer soaks jute in flooded fields where rice normally grows. United Methodists are among religious bodies helping the Asian nation recover from major cyclone and flooding damage.

PHOTOS COURTESY THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER and ALABAMA JOURNAL

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—Paws are Working Saints, declares the P.A.W.S. ministry sponsored by Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery. Proof is seen, top photo, as Theaola Clifton, right, enjoys a visit with Gandolph and owner, Ceil Dean, during therapy session at Montgomery Rehabilitation Hospital. Further proof? How about the look on Keith Eutsey's face after Elvis the cockatiel perched on his head at the Children's Center. P.A.W.S. volunteers and pets also visit nursing homes.

Network cutback fails to stop religion series

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—Despite cancellation of production funding from the NBC Television Network, an interfaith broadcasting coalition plans to go forward with a series of four one-hour religious programs on NBC during 1992.

The religious programs had been thrown into doubt when NBC notified the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission, Inc. that it would provide air dates for the 1992 programs but eliminate the production funds it had provided the previous four seasons.

NBC's decision to eliminate production funding for 1992 is the latest in a series of setbacks for religious programming that National Council of Churches staff member David Pomeroy and others in the field have challenged in recent years with only limited success.

In 1986 NBC eliminated its religious production unit; CBS followed two years later.

Negotiations with the Interfaith Broadcasting Network led to commitments to religious broadcasting on a diminished level—in the case of NBC the four yearly time slots, including funds for production and promotion in 1988 and 1989 but only production funds in the next two years.

On the regional level, a recent survey of 14 cities made by the Association of Regional Religious Communicators documented what the group termed significant losses in religious programming in Cincinnati, Detroit, Milwaukee, Dayton, New York, Seattle and Toledo.

While it is unclear how much funding will be available for each of the four 1992 NBC broadcasts, Mr. Pomeroy, treasurer of the interfaith group, said in an interview earlier this month that each group scheduled to produce the four programs plans to go forward with its broadcasts.

Mr. Pomeroy said the agencies involved decided to make the commitments to protect against losing their NBC air time in future years.

The agencies are the National Council of Churches, the United States Catholic Conference, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Mr. Pomeroy said an appeal to member denominations to fund the council broadcast netted a total commitment of $50,000 from five denominations—the United Methodist Church, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Disciples of Christ and the Church of the Brethren.

Women hymnists proved potent long ago

By TOM MORTON
Religious News Service

WINTER PARK, Colo.—Churches that wouldn't think of allowing a woman to preach regularly sing old favorites such as "Blessed Assurance" and "Jesus Loves Me."

Those hymns, however, were written by women, and they have a persistent power, said Jo Ellen Heil at the biennial conference of Christians for Biblical Equality recently.

"The average person may not remember a sermon, but they would remember a hymn."

While many of these hymns sound tame now, they introduced some radical ideas about God when their authors penned them in the 19th century, she said.

For example, "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know," Ms. Heil said, "introduced the concept of loving God, and a God who cared for children—radical concepts in the 19th century."

This hymn—considered the most popular in the world—was written by sisters Susan and Anna Warner and was adapted from their novel "The Wide, Wide World."

Another hymn writer, Frances Ridley Havergal, was a highly sought-after concert soloist and pianist. She turned her talents to sacred music and wrote "I am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus," "Like a River Glorious" and "Take My Life and Let It Be."

One of Havergal's admirers was Fanny Crosby, the most prolific hymn writer ever with as many as 9,000 hymns to her credit.

Blind from birth, Crosby had made a name for herself as an educator and composer of popular secular songs.

She composed such hymns as "Blessed Assurance," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me" and "To God Be the Glory."

History of Hymns

'I am so glad' celebrates fact of Jesus' love

I am so glad that our Father in heav'n
Tells of his love in the Book he has giv'n;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see—
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.
I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves even me.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Philip P. Bliss attended a meeting where the familiar song "O How I Love Jesus" was sung repeatedly.

After the service, Bliss thought that rather than singing about his love for Jesus, he should sing of Jesus' love for him.

After composing words and music, Bliss published the song in a small collection of Sunday school songs in 1871. In a few years the song became exceedingly well known both in the United States and in England.

Born in a log cabin in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, Bliss was converted at age 12. Baptized in a creek near his home by a Christian minister, he joined the Cherry Flats Baptist Church in nearby Tioga City, Pa.

In 1860, with the help of his horse, Old Fanny, and a small reed organ, he began work as a professional music teacher. He taught singing schools during the winter season and, for several summers, attended the Normal Academy of Music at Geneseo, N.Y.

Beginning in 1874, he was associated with Major D. W. Whittle in revival meetings in many states. In addition to leading music in these services, Bliss became a prolific writer of both words and music that greatly enriched the body of evangelical song.

Among his well-known hymns are "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," " 'Man of Sorrows,' What a Name," "Sing Them Over Again to Me" and "Almost Persuaded."

His tragic death in a train wreck in Ashtabula, Ohio, following Christmas of 1876, left a great void in the hearts of many people who admired and respected his musical gifts.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Tell Out, My Soul"

'Sacred worth' examines church, homosexuality

United Methodist News Service

"Perhaps no other contemporary issue holds the Christian church so firmly in its grasp as the torturous debate over homosexuality," the Rev. Paul A. Mickey writes in the preface of a recently released Abingdon Press book.

Debate over ordination of homosexuals has taken place since 1972 in the 8.9 million-member United Methodist Church and in other mainline denominations.

"Of Sacred Worth" borrows its title from the present United Methodist official stance affirming the availability of God's grace to all persons but prohibiting ordination of homosexuals and deeming homosexual practice "incompatible with Christian teaching."

That traditional stance is the one Dr. Mickey, an evangelical leader in the denomination, takes in his latest work. But the associate professor of pastoral theology at United Methodist-related Duke Divinity School in Durham, N.C., is careful to point out that "the attitude of the church needs to be one of acceptance of the sacred worth of gay men and lesbians."

He outlines biblical positions and arguments of both traditionalists and revisionists and includes discussion sections on conflicts between the two.

Traditionalists, he says, believe that Scriptures oppose homosexuality; revisionists, that the passages in question do not necessarily refer to homosexuality.

Dr. Mickey points out that "the words homosexual and homosexuality were not in the Hebrew or Greek vocabulary" and the King James Version of the Bible "does not use the term homosexual or its derivatives."

Later versions, including the Revised Standard Version, The Living Bible and the New American Standard Version, reflect use of the term with "interchangeable credence with 'sexual perverts' and 'homosexual perverts,' " he adds.

Beyond its ministry to individuals, "the church has a ministry to all its families, including—perhaps especially—to the families in which either a parent or a child has mustered the courage to disclose his or her homosexuality," Dr. Mickey writes.

Dr. Mickey has served on the board of Good News, an unofficial United Methodist evangelical group based in Wilmore, Ky.

Dear Deborah

Family conference helps overcome conflicts

Dear Deborah:

In response to comments by "George" several weeks ago: Many of the greatest heroes of the Bible were soldiers. In Judges, I believe, you'll find the comment, "Saul has killed his thousands and David has killed his ten thousands."

If you prefer the New Testament, you'll learn that the advice of Jesus to his disciples before he was taken by the Romans was, "He that has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one."

Possibly you're unaware that the correct translation of the commandment ordinarily stated as "Thou shalt not kill" should actually read "Thou shalt not MURDER." There's a big difference.

I don't know where you got your impression that Jesus advocated gutlessness. He physically threw the moneychangers out of the Temple, you'll recall.

The Bible is a history of brave men and women who defended their country, their families and their lives. Their actions needed no defense, nor do those of our brave fighting men and women who have the apparently thankless task of protecting YOU today.

—Mark

Dear Mark:

You are entitled to your own opinion and so am I. There were a lot of other heroes in the Bible who were not soldiers.

And you have taken the quote from Jesus out of context. The reference is Luke 22:36. I am not going to debate it here, but I hope that readers will look it up and talk about it in their own churches.

We are a lively church with people encouraged to do their own thinking rather than let someone else tell us what we must believe. I hope we all appreciate that freedom!

Poem of the Week

CONTENTMENT

This autumn of our years
becomes the autumn
of our discontent,
when flesh is frail
with dreams bursting
as bubbles on the wind . . .
But, Lord, You are our
contentment,
bringing strength of faith
the flesh could never know.

—PAUL K. McAFEE

September 15, 1991

'Is The Day The Lord Has Made'

Also, It Is The Day Designated By The Annual Conference As

Retired Ministers Homes Sunday

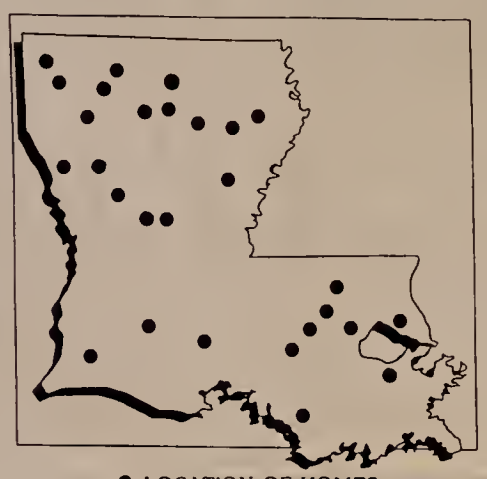
Since the Retired Ministers Homes Program was discontinued as a recipient of funds from the Good Samaritan offerings in 1988 the Annual Conference has approved a "Special Day" for this ministry. **Sunday, September 15** has been so designated. Each local church is asked to observe the occasion by presenting this Conference Advance Missionary Special and giving members of the congregation opportunity to contribute financially.

The transition from participating in Good Samaritan receipts to a special offering has been slow. In effect it simply added another request for funds to the multiplicity of appeals. For the past two years other special offerings (Conference and General Church) have been requested on the same date or previous Sunday as that scheduled for the Retired Ministers Homes Board. All of these causes are valid and significant. We feel that our particular program has merit and provides a beneficial service to a segment of our retired ministers and their families.

Hopefully, the number of churches supporting this ministry will increase each year. The response to the September 15 offering will largely determine the future course this program will take. At the present time we have forty homes, a six unit apartment building, and a duplex. Aging of the homes means increased maintenance and repair expenditures. The homes have an insured value of over $2,500,000.00. Escalating rates make insurance coverage an increasing concern. Administrative costs, though reduced in recent years, are significantly beyond our resources.

The effective continuation and expansion of providing homes for retired ministers and their spouses can be greatly enhanced by the generous support of churches, classes and individuals. For 38 years this ministry has been made possible by concerned and loyal contributors. We invite their continued support and encourage others to join them in this worthy enterprise.

RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES
United Methodist Church
Louisiana Conference



• LOCATION OF HOMES

Alexandria	(1)	Minden	(2)
Amite	(1)	Natchitoches	(1)
Baton Rouge	(2)	New Orleans	(1)
Belcher	(1)	Pineville	(1)
Bernice	(1)	Plaquemine	(1)
Bossier City	(3)	Ponchatoula	(1)
Coushatta	(1)	Rayville	(2)
Downsville	(1)	Ruston	(6)
		6 unit apartment building Duplex	
Franklin	(1)	Shreveport	(1)
Hammond	(1)	West Monroe	(1)
Homer	(1)	Slidell	(1)
Iota	(1)	Vivian	(1)
Jonesville	(1)	West Lake	(1)
Lafayette	(2)		
Mansfield	(1)		
Monroe	(1)		

IN MEMORY OF:	BY:
Mrs. Tammy Milton	Jane T. Omohundro
Mrs. Lola C. Laird	Mr. & Mrs. J. Russell C. Laird
Rev. Albert A. Collins	Don't Mention Age Group, Ingleside UMC

IN HONOR OF:	FROM:
Angus Carruth	Mrs. Marcy Perkins
Rev. C. D. Pinkard	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Solomon
Rev. & Mrs. Doug McGuire	Mrs. J. C. Love

RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES BOARD, INC.
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
RMHBC
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

HOUSING LOUISIANA RETIRED MINISTERS

Retired Ministers Homes Board, Inc.

Because of a felt and recognized need on the part of interested clergy and concerned laity, in 1953 the Louisiana Annual Conference authorized the formation of the Retired Ministers Homes Board. Rev. James Grambling, a prime mover in the project, became the first Director and served in that capacity for 19 years. He was followed by Rev. James Adams who held the position for 17 years. Since its inception tbis Board has existed as an agency for rendering service to retired Louisiana Methodist ministers and their families.

The first home was built in 1956. There are now forty homes throughout the state, a six-unit apartment building and a duplex in Ruston. A recent survey of ministers who will be eligible to retire within the next ten years indicated that 37 anticipate requesting housing through the Retired Ministers Homes Board. This ministry has been, and continues to be, dependent upon the financial support of individuals and special offerings from the churches.

Laypersons and local churches are encouraged to build a home in their community. This can also be done jointly with the Board paying up to $30,000.00 on the project. An excellent plan, used in the construction of two new homes, is for the retiring ministers to share with the Board in the cost of construction. Also, individuals are encouraged to donate property and to make memorial gifts, or make contributions in honor of someone.

This past year a lovely home in Downsville was occupied for the first time by a minister and his wife. A small home in Ruston was completely remodeled and enlarged at a cost of $34,000.00 and is now occupied. A new bome in Ruston was built as a joint enterprise with the Board and a minister and his friends sharing in the cost of construction.

The value of this program is verified by the many expressions of appreciation from the satisfied residents of these homes. Methodists of Louisiana are to be commended for making this ministry a reality and are encouraged to enhance its effectiveness by continuing support. The third Sunday in September is normally set by the Conference as "Retired Ministers Homes Sunday." All churches are encouraged to present this ministry and receive a special offering at that time.

Lewis Love, Chairman
P. O. Box 1219
Ruston, LA 71273-1219
(318) 255-5601

Home in Slidell Dedicated

A Service of Dedication for the Retired Ministers home in Slidell was held May 18. Dr. H. Warren Blakeman, Superintendent of North Shore District, led in the worship experience. Also participating were: Dr. J. Philip Woodland, pastor of First United Methodist Church, when the home was secured; Dr. DeWitt M. Ginn and the Reverend Gary Don Willis, ministers of First United Methodist Church in Slidell at the time of the dedication; Mr. W. A. Buster Baker who gave the welcome and introduced special guests; Mr. Mat Kawasaki who presented the home for dedication. The Reverend James W. Ailor unveiled the dedication plaque and the Reverend Angus Carruth accepted the home on behalf of the Retired Ministers Homes Board. Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Scott of West Monroe were in attendance representing the Board.

This house, located at 1558 Wildwood Lane, was purchased jointly by the First United Methodist Church of Slidell and the Retired Ministers Homes Boards. The church provided furnishings for the home. Jim and Hazel Lea Ailor have been the only ministerial family to occupy this residence.

May 18 was also Hazel Lea's birthday. This provided family members and the large number of friends in attendance the opportunity to share in a time of fellowship, celebration and refreshments.

Laypersons and local churches are encouraged to build a home in their city. Tbis can also be done jointly, as in the case of this Slidell home, with the Board paying up to $30,000 on the project. A plan, used in the recent construction of two new homes which has merit, is for a retiring minister to share the cost of construction with the Board. Also, individuals are encouraged to donate property and to make memorial gifts or contributions in honor of someone.

Appreciation is expressed to First United Methodist Church, Slidell, and others like it, in helping provide an increasing number of residences for retired ministers and their families.

Home in Slidell

Scenes from the dedication of the home in Slidell.

The Reverend Angus Carruth, Executive Director of the Retired Ministers Homes Board, Inc., is shown addressing those present during the dedication of the home in Slidell.

I am enclosing a contribution of $_____ for: (check one)

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____ Reserve for Building Homes

____ Undesignated

As a memorial to _____

In honor of _____

Send ackowledgment to _____

Address _____

_____

My name and address is _____

_____

My church is _____

District _____ Date _____

____ I would be interested in donating my home or other property

Mail checks to:
Retired Ministers Home Board, Inc.
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

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Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Turn the Power On!

This week's column is written by Dr. C. Gerald Richardson, Acadiana District Superintendent.

Reflecting on the heritage of our faith causes me to try to understand some of the power that must have existed in the early church. Obviously, I do not mean the kind of power that we usually think about today. There was, of course, no power produced by electricity or engines of any kind. But there was a power that derived from the great faith of the people. It proved to be a power that has not been duplicated since.

What was it that gave the early church such power? How could they thrive and grow in the face of the tremendous obstacles before them? Why was the church able to face down its critics to become the driving force in history that it eventually became?

I suggest that all this was possible because there were people who were committed to it and who were willing to put their trust in its claims upon their lives. They were so filled with the spirit of the risen Christ that they could not be contained either by threat, or by force or by ridicule. And in their faithfulness, they found the promises of God being ever fulfilled in their midst.

The world has changed now and so have people. Our understanding of almost everything is so much more now than it was then. Our lives are filled with hundreds of alternatives to committed Christian living. Sometimes it seems too difficult even to find a little bit of time for the discipline of Christian faith. The result is that, too often, we catch ourselves asking why our lives do not have more meaning.

Perhaps the new beginnings of Autumn would be a good time for renewal of commitment to our faith. There will be many new programs and activities getting underway in your church in the next few days. The church needs you. God needs you. The world needs your witness. But most of all, you need the encounter, the challenge, even the sacrifice that goes with knowing that faith holds a place of priority in your life. Be sure and be in church this Sunday. Let the power begin to grow in you.

Dr. C. Gerald Richardson

Local Development Director Receives National Recognition

The Reverend Augie Aamodt, Director of Development at Louisiana Methodist's Children's Home in Ruston, recently received recognition by two national organizations.

By a unanimous vote he was elected chair-elect by the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries Section of Public Relations, Development and Marketing. In this position he will be serving as program chairman for the 1992 national meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. Following that meeting he will serve a two-year term as national chairman.

Aamodt has also been selected chairman of the Protestant Association of Health and Welfare Ministries, Section of Public Relations, Development & Marketing. He is serving a two-year term.

In addition to these two chairmanships he is a member of the National Planned Giving Association.

Most recently he has been chosen to serve on the National Planned Giving Institute Reference and Advisory Committee of the Robert Sharpe Company, Inc. in Memphis, Tennessee.

He also serves on the Executive committee of the National Child Care Development Conference.

This is his sixth year as Director of Development at the Ruston Children's Home.

Pastoral Counseling Skills Workshop Set Sept. 19

A workshop on improving pastoral counseling skills has been set in Baton Rouge for Thursday, September 19, 1991. The Life Resources Counseling Center, a not-for-profit program of Behavorial Health, Inc., a division of General Health, Inc., is the sponsor of the program.

According to Mr. Zahn Martin, LRCC Program Director, the workshop will be presented by Dr. Myron Madden, one of the most respected pastoral counselors in the New Orleans area and past Clinical Professor of the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine at the LSU Medical Center in New Orleans. Dr. Madden is author of *Claiming Your Heritage, The Power to Bless* and *Blessing: Giving the Gift of Power.* He is also the supervisor of the Association of Pastoral Counselors and is a Diplomate of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

The Pastoral Counseling Skills workshop is a training experience for clergy which incorporates case supervision and instruction under the direction of Dr. Madden. The program covers case supervision, a topic that involves participants in case discussion in group sessions, and didatics, where specific topics directly relevant to counseling activities is taught.

Participants enrolling in the workshop will attend three separate sessions, the first beginning on Thursday, September 19, 1991, and then again on the two succeeding dates of October 17 and November 21, 1991. The sessions last two hours each and are offered at two separate times on each presentation day ... 10:00 a.m. to noon and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The tuition for the Pastoral Counseling Skills workshop is $40 per individual session. Training received will qualify interested participants in clinical preparation for membership in the American Association of Pastoral Counseling.

Registration for the Pastoral Counseling Skills workshop is required and enrollment is very limited. More information or phone registration is offered by calling 769-5777 for the Life Resources Counseling Center, 6160 Perkins Road, Suite 120 in Baton Rouge. Registration ends September 9, 1991.

Covenant Players: A Different Christian Medium with a Familiar Gospel Message

When the Fall Convocation meets at Louisiana College (Pineville) on September 28, Louisiana United Methodist youth will enjoy dramatic and humorous sketches by the Covenant Players (CP), a group whose performances are similar in structure to the school and community drama groups throughout Louisiana.

The familiarity ends there, however. While the medium may be similar to secular repertory theatres, the message is quite different because the CP actors are under another Director.

Founded in 1963 by Charles Tanner, a former motion picture producer and playwright, Covenant Players has over 125 mission units (three to six missioners) on tour in 65 countries. Its aim is to share the ministry of faith in Jesus Christ through drama, dance, mime and music. To that end, Mr. Tanner has written over 2000 plays for the CP repertoire.

Members of the interfaith CP ministry have given over one-million performances in 17 languages. Each missioner agrees to a minimum one-and-a-half years contract at minimal salary when he/she joins the organization. Despite the rather strict requirements of the group, members of the unit currently assigned to the Louisiana area for the fall tour say that the spiritual benefits and fellowship make many of them life-time participants.

Ms. Dianne Riedyk, an Australian by birth, is leader of the Louisiana unit. She says that she plans to stay with CP until "the Lord leads me elsewhere." Her 5½ year membership has "strengthened [her] faith in Jesus" and "helped [her] grow-up." She joined CP when a touring company visited her church.

Ms. Karen DeMasters, a seven-year veteran, was born in Washington. She sees CP as a "life-long ministry" within a large Christian family. The people she meets on tour, including the families CP missioners stay with while travelling, are part of the spiritual network, she says, who "become precious to us" through the years.

Mr. Craig Holcomb, a Vermount native, is the third member of the mission troupe. He counts the experience of living totally in trust on the Lord as a major plus of his ministry. He adds that he's learned a great deal about "fellow believers" and the universality of the Church. He notes that he has found faithful Christians in all denominations.

This CP unit will be in Lafayette, Lake Charles and Alexandria throughout September and in Shreveport in the middle part of October.

Those interested in having the group visit their churches and/or groups may contact the Southwest Regional Office of Covenant Players; P.O. Box 1125; Arlington, TX 76004; 817-860-9839. Fees are based on the type of presentation desired.

Covenant Players on the Louisiana Circuit — (L. to r.) Ms. Dianne Riedyk, Ms. Karen DeMasters and Mr. Craig Holcomb.

Fighting for the Right: Fall Convocation

The world's largest Youth Service Fund pillow fight will be part of a wonderful "day of fellowship, worship, fun..." according to Conference Youth Director Carolyn Dove, when United Methodist youth come together for the Youth Fall Convocation.

The day-long event will be held Saturday, September 28 at Louisiana College in Pineville, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All youth and youth workers are invited.

Besides the Guiness Book of World Records' pillow fight, an international repertory touring group from Los Angeles, the Covenant Players (see related story), will demonstrate the uses of drama in Christian worship, and "Spirit Song," a contemporary spiritual songleading group, will entertain. (Mr. Hammett Evans, a part time back up singer in this ensemble, is the son of the Reverend T. Nichols Evans, Jr., Noel United Methodist Church, Shreveport.)

Cost of Fall Convocation is $8.50 which includes lunch and a personalized pillowcase for pillow-fight participants. For further information, contact Mrs. Carolyn Dove, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; (502) 346-1646.

Update on Our Russian Methodist Church Friends

The Reverend Dwight Ramsey, pastor of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, has informed us that after days of silence, communications have been established once again with our Methodist friends in Sverdlovsk, Russia. During the Soviet crisis, Mr. Ramsey received only one message from Ms. Lydia Istomina, Lay Leader of the new Methodist Church. "It was impossible to get messages through to her," he said. Lydia's message reflected great concern over the crisis, yet she demonstrated a remarkable calmness. Members of the Russian Methodist Church had called Lydia and said things like: "How fortunate we are to have our church. Because we have church and each other, we will not give in to despair." Lydia also said she had received several secret messages from Boris Yeltsin's office. One message to Lydia indicated that the leaders of the Coup had stored over 250,000 handcuffs in one warehouse in Moscow to be used on reformers.

Mr. Ramsey will be returning to Russia on September 17 with a delegation from Broadmoor United Methodist Church along with Bishop and Mrs. William B. Oden. Several United Methodist churches from the Louisiana Conference are presently gathering needed supplies for our Methodist friends in Russia to be sent with the September delegation. Extra suitcases full of supplies are being carried by the delegation at a cost of $125.00 per bag for air freight. Churches interested in helping with the shipment of supplies to Russia should contact Broadmoor United Methodist Church at 3715 Youree Drive, Shreveport, LA 71105; (318) 861-0586 as soon as possible.

Persons — Churches — Events

The Monroe District Council on Ministries announces a workshop entitled, "Say Yes for Sunday School and Family!" The workshop is scheduled for September 19, 1991, at First UMC in Bastrop. Leading the event will be Mr. Kirk McNeill from Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. McNeill, formerly with the General Board of Discipleship, will share his vast experience in Sunday School Development and his recent research into the American family and faith development. This new workshop will help participants: 1) See a new vision for Sunday school and the family; 2) Understand the changing family dynamics pioneered by boomer adults; 3) Learn practical ways to effectively do Christian Education in the 1990s. Registration information may be obtained from Dr. J. Philip Woodland, District Superintendent, 909 North 18th, Suite 209, Monroe, LA 71201-5744; (318) 387-7364; or Dr. J. Marion Braden, P.O. Box 118, Bastrop, LA 71220; (318) 281-2872.

* * *

The Lafon Nursing Home Auxiliary of the UMC will hold its Eighth Annual Luncheon Fashion Show on Saturday, September 14, 1991, at the Bayou Plaza Hotel in New Orleans at 12:00 p.m. This year's theme is "Dimensions in Fashions." Proceeds from the program will help benefit the residents of the Home. The regular quarterly meeting will be held Saturday, September 7, 1991, at Grace UMC in New Orleans.

* * *

A reception honoring the Rev. and Mrs. William Earl Nolan (Wishy and Barbara) was held in the Palmer Hall of **Nolley Memorial UMC** recently. A warm Jena welcome was extended by the Nolley church family and members of other area churches. Mr. Nolan became pastor of Nolley Memorial and Belah UMC after coming from Jefferson UMC in Baton Rouge.

* * *

Hartzell-Mount Zion UMC in Slidell held its annual Vacation Bible School this summer. The theme for this year was, "Jesus Calls: Come Follow!" The Rev. Alonzo Campbell, pastor, opened the school with an inspiring and challenging invocation. The chairperson for Christian Education, Mildred Hambrick, and Sunday School Superintendent, Dora Jackson, recruited the teachers and staff with Rebecca Washington serving as dean for the five-day activity. Dedicated teachers and staff conducted the classes with a variety of meaningful worship exercises and interesting, creative activities for over 85 students each day. The offering of $170 was placed for the Methodist Home in New Orleans as a local ministry. The School closed with teachers, students, parents and volunteers enjoying a fun picnic at John Slidell Park.

* * *

Dillard University in New Orleans opened its 1991-92 academic year with its annual two-day faculty conference on August 15-16 in Dent Hall, the first of more than a week of special opening activities for students, faculty and staff. Dr. L. Jay Oliva, Chancellor, president-elect and a Professor of History at New York University, addressed faculty on the conference's opening day. Dillard president, Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook, presented the address during Freshman Convocation on August 18 in Lawless Memorial Chapel, marking the beginning of Freshman Week, filled with academic and social events for freshmen, including academic placement examinations, orientation seminars, a picnic and much more. Fall classes began August 27.

* * *

Ms. Sandy Wilder of the General Board of Global Ministries will be the featured speaker at the **Baker UMC** Missions Conference which will be held September 27-29. The public is invited to hear her talk, "MISSIONS In USA." On Saturday a women's salad luncheon is scheduled for 11 a.m., and a district-wide covered-dish supper will take place at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Wilder will also preach at the 11 a.m. Missions Pledge Service on Sunday. Dr. Don Cottrill, Executive Director of the Conference Council on Ministries, will open the evening on Friday by speaking on United Methodist Missions in Louisiana. A covered dish supper will follow. The Rev. Ken Duke is pastor of Baker UMC.

Around the Conference

On Sunday, August 11, the Scholarship Committee of Bethel UMC in Logansport, awarded three college scholarships of $100 per month to each of three recipients for the duration of their college years so long as each recipient maintains the required grade point average. Receiving the award from committee chairman W. E. Stephens, are l. to r., Tammy Hamilton, Joey Register and Faith Register, while committee members look on. Shown are l. to r., Barbara Parker, June Register, Sarah Alford, Pat Stephens and the Rev. Loretta Lampkin. The scholarships are funded by a special endowment plus additional gifts from church families.

Editorial

Spiritual, physical plight of Soviets merits compassion

A reality lurking largely unnoted behind the upheaval in the Soviet Union merits our concern and response as Christians.

That reality was dramatized by a recent "60 Minutes" telecast showing the desperate living conditions of average Soviet citizens.

Image after image revealed grinding poverty and hunger abounding in a country that until recently postured as second only to the U.S. as an economic and industrial giant.

Indeed, as the facade of political stability drops from the crumbling federation of 15 Soviet republics, a terrible truth long proclaimed by Soviet dissidents such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov gains flesh-and-blood confirmation:

The military and technological "respectability" of the Soviet system was achieved at the expense of ordinary people who were deprived not only of basic human rights but also of food and other essentials.

We hail the apparent demise of that oppressive system. But we also regard as inappropriate any temptation toward gloating postmortems on the unfolding drama in the Soviet Union.

For example, we deplore the recent behavior of a "Christian radio" talk-show host who gleefully described the failed Soviet coup with I-told-you-so references to "the evil empire."

Among other things, such characterizations unfairly demonize and encourage prejudice against people who already have lived as victims of an unjust system all of their lives.

Throughout their history under Communist rule the Soviet people have had to tolerate brutal but politically stabilizing government policies at the expense of individual freedom and corporate prosperity.

Now they face an opposite danger: the specter of social anarchy. In face of that reality we as Christians dare not disregard the resulting new spiritual and physical hardships imposed upon the Soviet people.

Regardless of the outcome of the political turmoil encompassing their land, they face a struggle for individual and corporate survival. At minimum, a winter food shortage appears inevitable. They need as much help as can be offered them, and quickly.

Following are some ways in which we might help:

✓ Urge church-related and other relief agencies to provide short-term material aid to the Soviet people. Fortunately, church-to-church relationships and ties made possible by *glasnost* to humanitarian groups within the Soviet Union have opened channels through which such assistance can flow.

✓ Encourage President Bush and other world leaders to assist in creating a longer-term plan for developing the resources of the Soviet Union.

✓ Support initiatives to address the spiritual needs of the Soviet people such as efforts to start new Christian congregations and/or undergird the work of existing congregations. A recent agreement between the National Council of Churches and evangelist Billy Graham to work together to aid churches in the Soviet Union is one of numerous examples of how this need can be met.

✓ Regularly include the Soviet people in our prayers.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

An elderly Soviet woman prays. It has become clear that the military and technological "respectability" of the crumbling Soviet regime rested on the backs of such ordinary people, depriving them of basic human rights as well as food and other essentials.

Here I Stand

Should Christians divest as a means of protest?

By GLENN LaBAUVE

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Glenn LaBauve is a member of Casa View United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas (North Texas Annual Conference).

Should we as Christians divest our stocks in companies that are not environmentally sound, that have hiring practices that are suspect, or that may engage in unscrupulous activities?

I believe not, for two reasons:

First, stocks are seldom bought directly from a company but from other shareholders. A sell-off on the open market merely drives the price lower so that the stock sells for less than it is actually worth.

For example, no one would think of selling a $100 bill for $50 just because the ink was not totally environmentally safe. Similarly, a pension fund selling off its stock practices poor stewardship when it receives less than full value for its holdings.

Nevertheless, some people urge our church pension board and church members to do just that with their stocks and bonds.

Second, sound stewardship requires not only holding these objectionable stocks but taking an active role in managing them.

The United Methodist Church has over $3 billion in various pension funds. Individual United Methodists most certainly own billions more in stocks.

As a denomination we should take a stand that, where social injustice is being fostered by a company, we will represent our ownership at the stockholders meetings.

With the clout of ownership, we can make changes in the way businesses conduct themselves. Without ownership, we can only stand on the outside looking in.

Experience shows that corporate boards of directors listen to large groups of shareholders and those that don't can be replaced. Doing so, however, requires something that we often have not been willing to give: hard effort and active stewardship.

If there were people whom we knew could be spiritually saved, would we stay inside our church and shout from within that when they had changed their ways and were willing to be saved they could come in and we might accept their humble apologies?

Certainly we shouldn't, and I don't believe we would. Why then is that the very treatment that we often advocate and practice regarding corporations whose ethical conduct we question?

Corporations can be changed. They can be saved. But only by their owners. We must take an active role in their management or we are part of the problem.

Letters to the Editor

'Ethical realism' of editorial commended and expanded

Kudos for the Aug. 9 editorial headlined, "Arms Pact: Amen, but . . . ." My mentor, Reinhold Niebuhr, would be proud of you.

Peacemakers, Christian and otherwise, need to remember both poles of the dialectic in the command to be both "wise as serpents" as well as "innocent as doves."

All too often, church pronouncements forget the former and therefore are awash with moral sentimentalism.

Sadly, moral sentimentalists, by overemphasizing the power of moral persuasion and underestimating the demonic quality of tyrants and totalitarian regimes, have unwittingly paved the way for millions of deaths in the 20th century.

Unfortunately, the pronouncements regarding Desert Storm by mainline Protestant bishops and leaders did not show the theological and ethical realism of your editorial.

Walter Benjamin
St. Paul, Minnesota

Editorial: A big 'but'

Your Aug. 9 editorial said "Amen" to START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) recently signed by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev.

Then you added "but, in light of the proliferation of weapons worldwide, the pact deals with merely a small part of the overall ability of nations, including our own, to wage devastating wars."

There was a bigger, "but." But, back in Washington, the U.S. Senate voted for measures that could cause START to be declared null and void.

After nine years of negotiations, START establishes a careful balance between the two countries and includes extensive verification procedures to prevent cheating. It also says that the treaty can be declared null and void if this balance is upset by Star Wars or Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems beyond those allowed in the ABM Treaty.

While START was being signed in Moscow, the U.S. Senate was directing the Bush Administration to construct a ABM system at Grand Forts (within the ABM Treaty) and to plan to add other ABM systems which would bust the ABM Treaty. The Nunn Amendment which directed the administration to take this action was introduced in the Senate and must now be accepted by the House of Representatives.

Your editorial concluded with, " . . . we should regard the treaty as a beginning not an end . . . ."

Unless the leaders in the House reject the Nunn Amendment, we may not have even this beginning.

Edward C. Perry II
Palm Springs, California

Gang up on pastor?

Frequently we hear of congregations who "gang up" on their pastor, praying for his preaching and ministry, often with the result that he is transformed and his ministry revitalized.

Wouldn't it be a great idea if we took this concept and applied it to our government leaders? As Christians, we could gang up on our leaders and lawmakers, continually praying for them as they carry out their duties and responsibilities.

"The Lord controls the mind of a king as easily as he directs the course of a stream" (Proverbs 21:1, TEV). If our Lord can do this to a king, surely he can do it to a congressman!

Jim Sweeney
Dallas, Texas

I hear good preaching

I am writing in response to an Aug. 23 letter writer's question, "When have you heard a good, inspirational sermon with any enthusiasm on the part of the speaker?"

I hear one every Sunday in the First United Methodist Church of Kissimmee, Fla.

Jesus taught with parables and stories, even to large crowds. John Wesley read his sermons. Let each preach as the Holy Spirit leads.

If I go with a "listening ear," I will receive help and guidance and so will others, whatever the manner in which the sermon is given.

Mrs. Lee Mitchell
Kissimmee, Florida

Photo identified

Thank you for your interesting series of articles on clapping during worship services (see UMR, Aug. 16).

What you failed to mention is that the picture you have associated twice with these articles is one taken by Sallie Youngman of the organ, choir and soloist of the First United Methodist Church of Fort Collins, Co. We give you permission to use it any time you desire to do so. Members of our congregation are delighted that you selected our sanctuary as the headliner for your articles.

Incidentally, while our congregation does not applaud every anthem and musical presentation, we nonetheless feel that the applause is "holy clapping" whenever worshippers are so moved.

Robert L. Hamilton
Fort Collins, Colorado

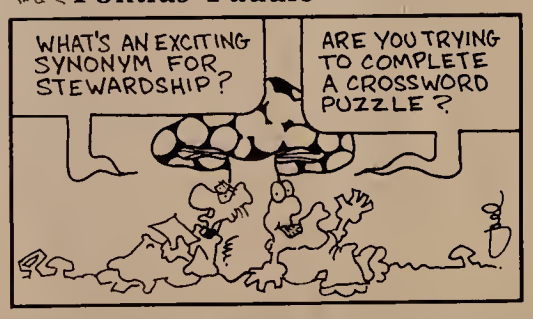
Clapping versus waving

After reading the Aug. 16 responses pro and con about applause during worship, I think we can take a cue from the gracious way many Hispanic churches show their appreciation.

They lift their bulletins in the air and wave them. There is a gentle whisper of sound and a visual stirring as of angel wings. It is as if the Holy Spirit were moving throughout the congregation.

Gertrude Suppe
South Gate, California

Pontius' Puddle



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What others are saying

"I love Jesus the Christ very deeply. And what I experience in his teaching of death and resurrection was Jesus saying to us, 'I am like you. I will show you that what dies is not what is true. And I will come back and reassure you that is the way it is. And if you understand that, then you will be free from the suffering that is attendant to the fear of death.' And I think that is the most magnificent essence of that teaching that exists in holy literature."

—Ram Dass, speaking at the National Hospice Organization meeting, St. Paul, Minn.

* * *

"To me, the worst evil in our history is racism: the cross of the Pacific people and all the so-called Third World. Dependency on a foreign culture is more soul-destroying than economic dependency. Only understanding in Christ will heal the wounds of racism."

—The Rev. Siatua Leuluailli, president, Methodist Church of Samoa.

* * *

"We never know for whom we will be an example. The cost of discipleship is losing the freedom of being anything other than the person God calls us to be."

—James Holsinger, lay leader, Virginia Annual Conference.

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Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Nahum 1:8 7)

Readings for week of Sept. 9

Monday: Psalms 119:105-112
Tuesday: Psalms 119:129-136
Wednesday: Proverbs 1:1-7
Thursday: Proverbs 2:1-8
Friday: Mark 7:31-37
Saturday: James 1:1-16
Sunday: James 1:17-27

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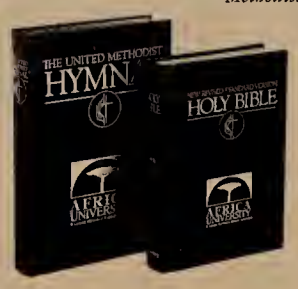

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Faith watch

SOVIET EFFORTS STILL ON: Despite political upheaval in Soviet leadership, cooperative efforts announced recently by officials of United Methodist agencies; the Soviet Peace Fund, a humanitarian organization; and the Russian Orthodox Church apparently will proceed as planned, said the Rev. **Robert Harman,** head of the General Board of Global Ministries' World Division. Planned projects include education, communications, publishing and health care. Last week recently commissioned missionary **Christine Hena**, a Liberian who has studied in the U.S.S.R, departed for the Soviet Union to work on several cooperative public-health projects.

Christine Hena

AID TO U.S.S.R.: Evangelist **Billy Graham** and the National Council of Churches have agreed to combine forces to provide spiritual and humanitarian aid to the Soviet people amid that country's political and economic upheaval. The Rev. **Joan B. Campbell,** NCC chief executive, said she and Dr. Graham had a "long and good conversation" in which they agreed to cooperate to aid churches in the Soviet Union. Dr. Graham said he discussed spiritual matters with both Soviet President **Mikhail Gorbachev** and Russian Republic President **Boris Yeltsin** during his recent visit there.

ONE BOOK FOR WORSHIP: The churchwide committee developing a new United Methodist Book of Worship has decided to produce a money-saving single volume, rather than a two-volume set as previously announced. In a recent meeting via telephone conference call, the 23-member committee learned that a hard-cover copy of 560 pages, including all the official rituals of the church, could be produced to sell at $24.95 a copy. A slump in the printing industry has made pricing more competitive and "a much better buy for the church," according to the Rev. **Andy Langford** of the church's General Board of Discipleship. The proposed Book of Worship will be considered for adoption by the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

DEACONS RECOMMENDED: A Commission for the Study of Ministry in The United Methodist Church has recommended that deacons function as members of a permanent order dedicated to Christian service such as health and education rather than preparing for ordination as clergy as deacons within that denomination now do. A proposal to establish an order of consecrated deacons is one of the key recommendations of the 35-member commission, which will report to the 1992 General Conference, the denomination's policymaking body, next May.

SPEAKING OUT: About 1,100 letters regarding the issue of homosexuality have been received by the church's General Council on Ministries since January, said C. **David Lundquist,** chief executive of the program coordinating council. Mr. Lundquist told the final meeting of the Committee to Study Homosexuality Aug. 22-25 in Lake Junaluska, N.C., that about 600 of the letters urged the retention of The United Methodist Church's current language holding homosexual practice to be "incompatible with Christian teaching." He said that other letters quoted biblical injunctions against homosexual practice, questioned the makeup of the committee or commended its work.

OVER THE TOP AT DUKE: United Methodist-related Duke University Divinity School in Durham, N.C., this year has the largest enrollment in its history, said its dean, the Rev. **Dennis Campbell,** as the seminary session opened last week. "We had a 37 percent increase this year in applications and are getting a huge return on our acceptances," he noted. Dr. Campbell didn't have an exact figure at opening but estimated enrollment around 460 students in all programs. The Association of Theological Schools recently reported that enrollment in all seminaries in the U.S. and Canada was up another 5 percent in 1990 after 1989's figures showed reversal of a previously steady decline.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Study panel disagrees on homosexuality

Unanimous report clarifies division in UMC over acceptability of homosexual practice

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Agreeing to disagree on several major points, including whether homosexual practice is a sin, the 22-member United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality nonetheless last week unanimously adopted a recommendation that intends to clarify a longstanding division within the church.

The committee is offering the church a 44-page report detailing continuing areas of disagreement, explaining the results of its three-year study and offering recommendations on how United Methodist congregations can minister to gays, lesbians and their families (see accompanying stories).

Two recommendations

At the heart of the report are two opposing recommendations—first proposed last January—on whether The United Methodist Church should change its current stance. As stated in the church's Social Principles, that stance identifies homosexual people as individuals of "sacred worth" but holds homosexual practice to be "incompatible with Christian teaching."

One recommendation from the committee, which at least 18 committee members are expected to sign, concludes that "the present state of knowledge in the theological and scientific fields does not provide a satisfactory basis on which the church can responsibly maintain the condemnation of all homosexual practice."

In terms of its effect upon the United Methodist Book of Discipline—the denomination's collection of laws—this recommendation would eliminate the "incompatible" statement from the Social Principles.

The other opinion, which four of the panelists have indicated they will sign, contends that the same "present state of knowledge" in the areas surveyed by the study committee doesn't provide a basis for the church to change its position.

The effect of this recommendation upon the Discipline would be to retain the "incompatible" statement.

Last-minute effort

A last-minute effort to amend the two recommendations was offered by the Rev. Rebecca Parker, a committee member expected to be among the signers of the recommendation to eliminate the condemnatory language.

Dr. Parker, a United Methodist clergywoman, is president of Starr-King School for the Ministry, a Unitarian seminary that is part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif.

In a three-page paper, she urged the committee to recommend that the church adopt a stance which would acknowledge both viewpoints on homosexuality until further study unearths definitive evidence one way or the other.

She said that her proposal was motivated by a strong concern over the extent of polarization on homosexuality that is taking place across the church.

"As a result of working on this committee, I've recognized the 'log in my own eye' regarding evangelicals," she said. "I've come to a clearer understanding about their theology, which sees a moral order based on the love of God.

"I'm more willing to acknowledge that the position of those with whom I disagree is authentically Christian. I no longer feel that my position has to replace the current position. Instead I'm asking that my position be acknowledged by my denomination."

Research topics listed

Although her proposal was lauded by some members as having "great merit" in its attempt to lessen the church's polarization, committee members ultimately decided, after a two-hour late-night discussion, to proceed with the two original recommendations.

During its three-year study, the committee has heard hundreds of hours of testimony from experts in the Bible, theology, ethics, biology, sociology and psychology.

In addition, six "listening posts" were held around the nation to hear testimony from United Methodist clergy and laypeople regarding their experience with and their views on homosexuality.

The committee's report will be presented to the church's General Council on Ministries during its meeting Dec. 2-6 in Chicago.

The program coordinating council will have the power to reject the report or to send it, with or without amendments, to the church's 1992 policymaking General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

The Committee to Study Homosexuality disagrees on these points:

The relative weight to be given Scripture, tradition, experience and reason, although study panelists agree that each is important, and they agree on the primacy of Scripture.

Whether homosexual practice is a major biblical topic, or, if homosexual practice is to be listed as a sin, what weight or importance should be given to it in church teaching.

Whether the existence of a common thread of specific biblical references or allusions to a subject such as homosexual practice constitutes, by itself, sufficient basis for a moral norm.

What are acceptable moral options for persons of homosexual orientation.

The weight we should give scientific evidence in arriving at moral judgment.

—Excerpted from the study committee's report

UMR ILLUSTRATION

Committee offers guidelines on church teachings

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Here are some excerpts from the report of the United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality.

Things the Church Can Responsibly Teach

✓ Homosexuality is best considered in the context of a more general Christian understanding of human sexuality.

✓ Sexual expression is most profoundly human when it takes place in the context of a caring and committed relationship where each partner can be an expression of God's grace for the other.

✓ There are substantial numbers of persons of homosexual orientation within the church whose gifts and graces manifest the work of the Spirit among us.

✓ The specific causes of homosexual orientation remain unclear, although various scientific theories about this contribute to our overall understanding.

✓ The basic human rights of gay and lesbian persons should be protected by the church, and the general stigmatizing of such persons is inappropriate in a church which understands all its members to be sinners who live by the power of God's grace.

Things the Church Cannot Responsibly Teach

✓ That the Bible is indifferent to homosexual acts. Although there are only a few passages where such are in view, in every one of those passages a negative judgment about homosexual practice is either stated or presumed.

✓ That all biblical references and allusions to sexual practices are necessarily binding today just because they are in the Bible.

✓ That certain sexual behaviors are morally acceptable just because they are practiced by substantial numbers of people, nor just because they correspond to people's subjective inclinations.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

NCC chief challenges women's seminar participants to work for racial justice

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Racism has never been a challenge to the Christian faith but it is definitely a challenge to the Christian church, says the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches.

Joan B. Campbell

Keynoting the Women's Division National Seminar recently, Dr. Campbell reminded the United Methodist women, "We do not work against racism because someone decreed it to be a priority or because the United Methodist Church decided it would be a program.

"We work against racism because Jesus is our Lord . . . and bled and died for all of us."

Segregation recalled

She asked the women to think back to the era when there were slave balconies in churches and to later years when churches segregated people on the basis of race.

"It was not difficult to justify not allowing people to eat at lunch counters when the table of the Lord was not shared together," she said.

"It is a sin of our times that the table that calls people to unity was a place where our social sins were sanctified."

Ms. Campbell said today racism is "less evident" because there are fewer physical barriers and more psychological barriers, which are harder to remove. Added to those barriers are the issues of sexism and poverty.

In a personal reflection, the national council's chief executive confessed, "Like all white people, I can no longer say I am not a racist; all we can say is that we are recovering racists.

'Keep you honest'

"If you have dealt with recovering alcoholics, you know what it means to constantly have people to keep you straight and keep you honest."

Ms. Campbell told the women how she became involved in the civil rights movement as a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) laywoman in Shaker Heights, Ohio.

While volunteering for a voter registration drive during the mid-1960s to elect Carl Stokes the first black mayor of Cleveland, she learned that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. would be in her community. She offered her local church as a place for him to speak.

After she refused to cancel the invitation, she received bomb threats.

"I was no way prepared for the depths of racism and the fear, and for the hatred that I was to encounter," she said."I lost friends, family, and gained a life. After that event, it was not someone else's issue . . . I myself had experienced racism.

"For anyone who enters the battle of racial justice, that journey is absolutely critical."

Challenge issued

In a question and answer session, one Women's Division director asked, "Where do you see the challenge for white women in confronting racism?"

Ms. Campbell answered:

✓ Sit at the feet of minority people.

✓ Let ethnic people serve in leadership roles.

✓ Let people fully own their cultural differences.

Ms. Campbell reminded the United Methodist women that combatting racism is "not about winning or losing, not about taking away power from one and giving it to another. It is about those whose way has been marked by privilege and those whose way has been watered by tears coming together to be one new humanity."

Following the session, Women's Seminar participants received copies of the "Charter for Racial Justice Policies" written and adopted by the Women's Division in 1978 and adopted by the General Conference in 1980. The document calls on all United Methodists to aim for an "inclusive church and an inclusive society."

Missions board presents New York site rationale

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—Next May, the United Methodist Church's top legislative body will decide whether the church's General Board of Global Ministries would function better away from its longtime home at The Interchurch Center in New York.

A specially appointed task force already has declared a move from New York "feasible" and has recommended it.

That group will meet Sept. 27-29 at Lake Junaluska, N.C., to decide whether to recommend a specific city or cities to be considered for relocation.

Among factors General Conference delegates must weigh next May in making a decision is how relocation would affect the board's ability to carry out its mandates and mission responsibilities, both denominationally and ecumenically.

But the bottom line may be cost. While New York no doubt can be an expensive city, the board has some economic advantages there, including air fares lower than in some other cities and lower-than-normal rent.

A more important question, however, is whether the cost of relocating justifies a move to another city simply because it is "feasible" to operate there.

R. Randolph Smith, the Houston attorney who chairs the 15-member task force, agrees that relocation cost "ought to be a concern" but said he believes the money could be recouped without assessments on the church.

Mr. Smith told United Methodist News Service the maximum cost of relocation—based on renting, rather than buying, office space—should be about $9 million.

If the new city threw in some extra incentives, which would be likely, that cost might be a bit lower, he added.

Stephen Brimigion, Board of Global Ministries general treasurer, recently prepared a relocation estimate at the request of the board's administrative committee.

His figure is $16,630,400 in non-recoverable costs, not including price of renting or buying office space in another city.

Based on the assumption that 80 percent of the 249 executives and 20 percent of the 284 general staff would be willing to relocate, Mr. Brimigion estimates $9 million for staff moving costs alone.

With severance pay and new hires, his estimate rises to nearly $13 million.

The board's mission was also considered among relocation task force members, who recognize that some church people question whether the New York-based board is "out of touch with the grass roots," according to Mr. Smith.

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Faith connections

MISSIONARY LETTER: Members of the Northwest Texas Annual Conference learned last week about the fate of **Carolyn Belshe**, a member of First United Methodist Church in Lubbock, Texas, who serves as administrator of United Methodist-related Chicuque Hospital in Mozambique. In a letter reprinted in the conference's edition of The United Methodist Reporter, Ms. Belshe wrote that she and other workers survived an attack on the hospital by RENAMO rebels in June and have chosen to stay on at the hospital despite the dangers. She cited "fear, increased alcoholism, opportunistic looting" among the attack's effects, as well as "closer relationships, deeper commitments and an intensified awareness of God's presence."

CULTIVATING FUND-RAISER: United Methodists **Jack Riehl** and **Milton Sanford** have turned their half-acre garden plot into a field for the Lord. The two retirees, members of Mount Juliet (Tenn.) United Methodist Church, bave raised more than $1,100 since spring by offering their homegrown vegetables to other members and local restaurants for a "love offering." The two have harvested 20 crops this season, including cabbage, onions, potatoes, broccoli, peppers, sweet corn, cucumbers and "lots of tomatoes." Proceeds from the produce go into a fund to tend a 22-acre site where the congregation intends to build a new sanctuary.

'SAVING STATION' PRAISED: A two-week effort by Pittsburgh United Methodists to conduct an anti-drug "saving station" ministry has proved so successful they're ready to do it again, according to recent reports. The United Methodist Church Union in Pittsburgh joined with Baptists, Pentecostals and other congregations to sponsor the effort. Participants especially praised the effectiveness of personal faith testimonies offered during the event. "I know the testimonies made a difference," said the Rev. **Robert Richards**, director of the UM church union. The Pittsburgh program was one of eight sites this summer that expanded the anti-drug program advocated by the United Methodist Council of Bishops and spearheaded by Bishop **Felton E. May** (Harrisburg, Pa., Area).

Compiled from news and staff reports

GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES PHOTO BY JOHN C. GOODWIN

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Actress Billie Jean Young of Jackson, Miss., talks to God during her one-woman show called "Fannie Lou Hamer: This Little Light," presented at the Women's Division National Seminar (see accompanying story). Ms. Young wrote and performed the play, based on the life of Ms. Hamer, a Mississippi sharecropper who helped people gain the right to vote.

UM women called to blend faith with action in mission

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBUS, Ohio—United Methodist Women were reminded of their historic purpose of combining faith and action through mission during their recent 1991 National Seminar.

The Rev. Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, a Drew University theologian, told the eight-day gathering that responding to the call to social justice ministries may get these women labeled back home as "uppity."

But United Methodist Women "must become prophets and lend their voices to the expectations of the people in their communities," she said.

Hear poor's cries

"As Christian women, we are called to take God's creative activity into the world. We want to be women of faith and hear the cries of the poor. We want the spirit to be reality in our lives to teach us the way of the struggle."

During the closing worship service, Women's Division executive Ellen Kirby reminded the women that they "share the legacy of their foremothers" as Christians organized for mission.

The Women's Division is the parent body of the 1.2 million United Methodist Women.

For United Methodist Women, Ms. Kirby said:

■ Social justice work is at the heart of their understanding of mission.

■ Education concerning the root causes of social injustices is the fundamental task of women in mission.

"Your calling as laywomen of faith is as sacred as any calling of any minister, of any district superintendent, of any bishop," said Ms. Kirby.

"Some of you have been concerned how you will carry forward all these testimonies of faith and action. You have said, 'How will I take this back?'

"We are called to be faithful, not successful," said the Women's Division executive. "You must work in coalitions, such as other women's groups, ecumenical groups and grassroots organizations.

"Finally, remember that our denomination has a great history of social justice. We may not act like it sometimes, but we do have the Social Principles."

Ms. Kirby told the women to work in all areas of the United Methodist Church—their district, their conference, and in the General Conference—to make their voices known.

As an example of how this might be done closer to home, Carole Gruen of Olympia, Wash., said her plan of action for her annual conference is to keep offering resources on social issues until the women take notice. She is UMW secretary for program resources for the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference.

"I'm going to work on teen literacy and maybe even literacy in younger children and people past high school age," Ms. Gruen continued.

Excited about trip

Another participant, Marsha Carpenter of Pocomoke City, Md., was excited about her group's field-trip visit to a Habit for Humanity project in Columbus.

"There's no reason why I can't take a group some place to build houses next summer," she said.

Ex-governor seeks ministries to halt violence to children

Reporter Staff Special

COLUMBUS, Ohio—A former governor of Ohio wants United Methodist Women to create more ministries to prevent violence against children.

That was the challenge of United Methodist layman Richard F. Celeste, governor from 1983 to 1991, during the recent Women's Division National Seminar in Columbus.

Citing the importance of the Women's Division national "Campaign for Children," Mr. Celeste said he noticed in UM-related programs for children that "the one thing that is not discussed is children and violence."

As the father of six, Mr. Celeste said he has a high interest in the needs of children.

Two years ago Mr. Celeste asked a high school dropout what was his ambition for the future and what was his biggest problem in achieving it. The young man said his anger would keep him from achieving his goals.

"He told me, 'I'm angry that I won't be here 10 years from now. And it's not just anger, it's fear for my life. I don't know whether I will survive on the way home from school or in the project where I live.'

"That's a reality for him, because the high homicide rate for black males is there in their midst," said Mr. Celeste.

During his years as governor, Mr. Celeste said, he reviewed 106 cases of women who had killed someone to protect their children against acts of violence.

He said these women, who were battered and/or abused, were not all women of poverty. Many lived in suburban towns and rural communities. Some were thought to be "respectable Methodists."

"There is far more pain, far more violence than any of us want to acknowledge," he said.

"Some of it is caused by racism and poverty. But some is caused by areas that seem so normal, or even ideal, that it is almost impossible to believe.

"We must see and hear what is happening to our families—next door, down the street, in our Sunday School class."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

COLUMBIA, Mo.—Youths and youth leaders from the Minnesota conference dance during a pep rally prior to a "move-along-a-thon" during the recent Youth '91. At least $10,000 was raised for the United Methodist National Youth Ministry Organization's Youth Service Fund. The money will be used to assist youths in mission.

Youth goal: Interpret God's call to service

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

COLUMBIA, Mo.—"Empowering youth to discover and respond to God's call," has been voted the top priority of the National Youth Ministry Organization (NYMO) for 1991-1995.

Meeting at the University of Missouri Aug. 2-5, an estimated 200 delegates attending the convocation asked that a program of education be developed by United Methodism's program agencies to enable them to interpret and respond to that call.

Every two years, two youth and one adult delegate from each of the 72 annual conferences meets on a designated college campus for a national legislative assembly. Delegates vote on a national youth priority, as well as issues of vital interest to young people.

This year, delegates passed resolutions on AIDS; encouraging more youth delegates to general conference; sanctions against South Africa and asking annual conferences to be more accountable for money distributed by the NYMO Youth Service Fund.

"All youth are called . . . . Our faith calls us to enable one another to recognize and respect each one's gifts and then to use these gifts in service."

—National Youth Ministry Organization

They also overwhelmingly defeated a proposal to make the church's official position on abortion more restrictive.

In the proposal on youth and their call to ministry, writers said,"We recognize that God's call comes in many different forms to and for all persons regardless of race, gender, or age.

"All youth are called, but do not always recognize their calling. Those who do recognize their calling do not always know how to or are not always given the opportunity to respond.

"Our faith calls us to enable one another to recognize and respect each one's gifts and then to use these gifts in service."

Angela Gay Kinkead, national executive director for the youth organization, told the Reporter that the General Board of Discipleship will work with the United Methodist Publishing House and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to implement each phase of the program. That includes:

• Videotapes, featuring persons sharing how God has called them to serve in all vocations in ministry to others;

• Printed resources to compliment the video for use in UM Youth Fellowship and Sunday School groups;

• A resource directory of speakers, musicians, and others to lead events;

• Fliers and brochures to recommend the priority theme for youth retreats in jurisdictions, conference, districts, and local churches.

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Duke theologian resigns, gives up clergy credentials

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

One of the leading evangelical theologians within The United Methodist Church has resigned from Duke University Divinity School and surrendered his ministerial credentials.

Paul A. Mickey, associate professor of pastoral theology at the United Methodist-related seminary, has taken sabbatical leave until his resignation becomes effective June 30, 1992, said the Rev. Dennis Campbell, dean of the divinity school.

Dr. Campbell said Dr. Mickey cited "personal and family reasons" for his resignation. He noted that Dr. Mickey's son, Bruce, 20, an accomplished bicycle racer, was killed last year when his bike was struck by a speeding car on a back road in North Carolina.

"Paul was scheduled for a sabbatical this year, so we were prepared for his absence, but it was a surprise that his sabbatical request was followed by his resignation," Dr. Campbell said.

The Reporter's call to Dr. Mickey's home in Durham, N.C., was not returned. United Methodist Bishop C. P. Minnick (Raleigh, N.C., Area) was out of town and unavailable to comment on Dr. Mickey's resignation from the North Carolina Annual Conference.

Dr. Mickey also has resigned from the governing board of Good News, the unofficial caucus of evangelical United Methodists, said the Rev. James V. Heidinger II, executive director.

"I don't know what has happened," Dr. Heidinger told the Reporter. "It's disappointing; we sure love Paul."

Dr. Mickey has been one of the leading opponents to changing the church's stance which holds homosexuality "incompatible" with Christian teaching.

He was among Good News representatives to speak before the churchwide Committee to Study Homosexuality when it met in Atlanta in 1990.

His latest book on the traditional view against homosexuality, "Of Sacred Worth," recently was released by Abingdon Press, a division of the United Methodist Publishing House.

Dr. Mickey was ordained in 1966 in The Methodist Church.

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Mozart makes mostly mighty music

Bicentennial of genius' death leads churches, others into rich literature

By PAMELA SCHAEFFER
Religious News Service

Music-lovers worldwide are getting broad exposure to the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart this year, the 200th anniversary of his death.

Meanwhile, experts in church music in the United States are hoping for a fallout: more serious attention to church music overall.

When Mozart died on Dec. 5, 1791, shortly before his 36th birthday, he left a rich legacy of church music to complement his famous symphonies, concertos, chamber music and operas.

Even more, he revolutionized church music by introducing subjective emotions.

"Various sections in his masses and litanies could just as well be sung as a love duet in one of his operas," according to the program brochure prepared for "Mozart Year 1991" in Vienna, Austria

Mozart experienced conflict

Yet, Mozart experienced troublesome conflicts with a church official. And, in the view of some experts, those conflicts have an unfortunate parallel in the contemporary church.

To Carlos R. Messerli, president of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians in Lincoln, Neb., Mozart is a symbol of the contemporary church musician's lament.

Worship leaders are finding it increasingly hard to wring money from church budgets for serious music, because pastors and other members of the hierarchy are unsympathetic, Mr. Messerli stated.

As a result, "there is a great shortage of trained organists in the church," he said.

Bemoaning what he regards as a trend toward "entertainment" in church music—popular-style songs that will bring in new members—Mr. Messerli accused the church of "abandoning its heritage."

Similarly, in Mozart's day, church leader Hieronymus von Colloredo, prince-archbishop of Salzburg, imposed intolerable restrictions on the composer, causing him enormous grief.

For example, Mozart was required to limit the length of his Masses to 45 minutes, the limit of the archbishop's endurance for worship.

Eventually, the high-spirited young genius quarreled with his patron, was dismissed and spent the last 10 years of his life in a bitter struggle for financial security.

Because Mozart's church music is difficult to perform—often requiring an orchestra and chorus—it is more often performed in concert halls today than in churches.

Thomas Day, associate professor of music at Salve Regina University in Newport, R.I., is among critics of contemporary liturgy who view that as a mistake.

Today, Mozart's music "still strikes something in the hearts of worshipers," Mr. Day said. He added that he has been excoriated by some Catholic liturgists after expressing that view in his recent and controversial book, "Why Catholics Can't Sing."

Many contemporary liturgists are stressing "inculturated" music—that is, music that reflects a particular cultural heritage, usually a non-Western heritage, he said.

"Mozart is associated with an older form of worship" and has come to represent the Western European tradition that "determined reformers are trying to move away from," he said.

He thinks it's a mistake

Robert Batastini, senior editor at GIA Publications, Inc., a Chicago-based publisher of liturgical music, also feels that dismissing the classics is a mistake.

A "healthy diversity" in church music draws from a wide range of music, he said.

For many, the Mozart anniversary offers hope for a revival of sorts.

Robin Leaver, professor of church music at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, N.J., and interim head of the church music department, said many church choirs around the country are performing Mozart's music this year. In addition to the larger works, "everyone is taking the opportunity to do the smaller choral works, the anthems."

And in Vienna, Mozart's church music is being performed each Sunday at St. Michael's Church.

"Clearly what is happening is a new encounter with his music" that stands to enhance the musical sophistication of many church-goers, Mr. Leaver said.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Woman among new officers

HOLLAND, Mich.—Recently elected as the first woman to hold a top office in the Reformed Church in America was Beth Marcus, vice president. She has filled several top staff offices in the church, including head of its Board of North American Missions. New president is the Rev. Louis Lotz, pastor of Morningside Reformed Church in Sioux City, Iowa.

Missionary pilot serves at home in Zaire

By FAY SMITH

Four years ago, Jack Umembudi arrived in Hearne, Texas, with his family and little more than the dream of becoming a mission pilot.

Last year he returned to Zaire a full-fledged pilot in the United Methodist-related Wings of Caring Aviation Ministry.

Both Mr. Umembudi and his wife, Valentine, grew up in the homes of United Methodist preachers who considered themselves fortunate if they received a salary of $10 a month.

Mud walls and grass roofs

As children, the Umembudis lived in homes made of mud walls and grass roofs. Their household water supply was carried from a stream in a galvanized bucket. They cooked outdoors on a wood fire.

Thanks to United Methodist schools and scholarships, Mr. Umembudi was able to earn a degree in electrical engineering at the government university in Kinshasa, Zaire.

Then he worked with Dennis Fulton in the Methodist-Presbyterian mission hangar in Kananga, Zaire. He also took flying lessons from Rob Jones and Bill Stump, volunteer missionaries.

The Umembudis and their three sons went into culture shock when they arrived in the U.S. They searched for ways to relate to people insulated from each other by a superabundance of possessions.

Fortunately they found some caring people in churches that hosted them.

Among those people were Dr. Calvin and Sharon Woods who had invited them to come to Hearne, Texas.

Dr. Woods spent hours designing the training program and giving flight instruction to Mr. Umembudi.

Mrs. Woods and other members of Grace United Methodist church took care of the family's personal needs.

Learned aircraft mechanics

In 1988 the Umembudis moved to Waco, Texas, where Mr. Umembudi studied for his aircraft mechanic license. While in Waco, the family was affiliated with Sparks Memorial United Methodist Church of Bellmead.

While Mr. Umembudi studied aircraft mechanics, Mrs. Umembudi studied English and sewing.

Their sons, Mignon, Gig and Dennis, went to public school.

During his three-year stay in the U.S. Mr. Umembudi earned his private, commercial and instructor pilot licenses with instrument and multi-engine ratings.

Their recent return to Zaire brought reverse culture shock. The children must learn French in order to go to school.

Said their father: "There is no bus ride to school. There is no school breakfast, not even a water fountain. They felt bad when we left Texas because they made lots of friends there."

The Umembudis are serving an area in Zaire where people are very poor and children die because of the lack of money to get to a hospital, Mr. Umembudi said.

In Zaire, the average family of six has an annual income of $209. Measles kills more people than any other disease.

The country is a third the size of the United States, but there are only 1,820 miles of paved road. Planes must be used to transport church personnel, mail, medical supplies and people needing hospitalization.

Jack Umembudi at the controls of a mission plane.

Local-church 'teams' help ease AIDS loads

United Methodist News Service

A community of believers has lightened the load for some persons with AIDS in Arkansas.

"Care Teams" of at least seven persons in a local church make up the heart of the Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN).

Each team has as its goal the physical, emotional and spiritual caring for a person with AIDS.

Of the 26 Care Teams in Arkansas, six are either affiliated with or are solely United Methodist, and three more United Methodist churches in the state are waiting for their own teams.

"Laypeople who work on Care Teams see it as a real opportunity for them to do ministry and to grow," according to the Rev. Trudy James, director of the state's RAIN chapter.

That opportunity often includes serving as chauffeur, gardener, cook, housekeeper and friend, said Ms. James, since family and friends often desert people with AIDS, leaving them to face day-to-day life alone. And Care Team members are often the only ones left to plan memorial services upon the death of a client, she added.

An Episcopalian, Ms. James came to her job after serving as chaplain at a hospital in Little Rock, where she worked with people with AIDS. But it was the death of a friend and his parents' refusal to bury him in his home town that caused her to decide to work more closely with the network.

Ms. James and RAIN clients now travel around the state teaching church members about AIDS and services RAIN offers.

The Arkansas RAIN chapter has served 69 clients, ranging in age from 8 to 50. The state department of health reported 538 cases of AIDS between June 1983 and June 1991.

But Ms. James does not believe those statistics—at least not all of them.

"People don't get tested," she contends.

But, until the fear of AIDS abates somewhat, she says, testing should remain purely voluntary. Many people lose their jobs when they discover they have AIDS, she said, and then they have "an expensive disease, with no job."

RAIN, which began in 1989 in four states, must also deal with expenses. Now that its original two-year grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has run its course, each chapter must find its own funding.

"We get it any way we can," including contributions, other grants and fund-raisers, Ms. James said.

This article is based on one by Susan Polk, staff writer for the "Arkansas United Methodist," in a recent issue.

TV executive follows faith over career

Religious News Service

MINNEAPOLIS—Linda Rios Brook faced a crucial decision this summer: either give up her prestigious job as station manager of television station KARE, the NBC affiliate in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, or stop discussing her Christian beliefs at evangelical and charismatic conferences.

She chose the former.

Ms. Brook had been station manager of KARE since May 1989 and had held similar positions at television stations in Texas and Florida.

She had openly discussed her Christian faith at religious gatherings without controversy for years until the June 26 issue of "City Pages."

The paper, which describes itself as an "alternative news & arts weekly" in the Twin Cities area, published an article about her titled "God and Gannett," referring to the media conglomerate that owns KARE.

A caption with the article said, "Embattled KARE station manager Linda Rios Brook seems to see herself as a persecuted Christian; news staffers say they dislike her just for being herself."

It quoted comments she had made on such topics as demons, the New Age, the role of Jews in "persuading Pilate to crucify Jesus," and "the last days before the Tribulation and the entree of the anti-Christ."

In early August, Ms. Brook was a speaker at the International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit in Arden Hills, Minn.

Acknowledging that she had come to "a turning point in my life," she told the gathering that she must "either be silent about my Christian faith or risk being thought of as a fool, a zealot and a bigot."

Dear Deborah

Not only fathers abandon families. I did, too.

Dear Deborah:

As I read the Reporter this morning, I felt the need to share my story.

Not only fathers abandon families. I am a mother of three girls, who has walked away from them and their father. I'm in counseling to learn about myself and how to take care of me. It seems like such a selfish thing to do.

Along the path of life I've allowed people to manipulate me through jealousy, their drinking, power and control. There are so many problems that finally surfaced. I was becoming an abuser, had thoughts of suicide and have no self-esteem.

This summer I took two studies by United Methodist Women—one on the Gospel of John, the other on Changing Values/Changing Times. I was horrified to realize that I was not behaving as these Christian people would see me. The conflicts within me had changed my life drastically.

With the help of a friend and my brother, I went to counseling. I've joined an Al-Anon group and got a physical checkup by my doctor.

The road looks rough, with many bumps. I'm not just going "one day at a time" but one step at a time.

With God's help and strength I pray for my Christian faith to be awakened, my marriage renewed and my daughters' fear of me to be lessened.

I must remain anonymous.

Dear Anonymous:

Thank you for sharing your story. It may be used by God to reach others who need to know that although the road looks rough and hard, many people do travel it and find their way back.

I am glad you have found a team of support people who hang in there with you. It is important for every human being to know that they are precious and have worth in the sight of God and in their own eyes as well.

The UMW studies you did illustrate how fellowship and Bible study help all of us keep our eyes on Jesus and find the strength and courage we need every day, every step of the way.

I hope that you are developing the habit of daily prayer and Bible study for yourself too.

While you are working on your own needs and behavior, you can pray for your husband and your daughters that they too can know Jesus and find the will of God for their lives.

God wants the very best for each and every one of us. Sometimes that may not be what we think we want, but Christians for many centuries have witnessed to the fact that God's choice turned out to be the very best.

May you all know the peace that passes all understanding as you continue your journey of recovery.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Play hymn on your PC keyboard?

United Methodist News Service

Can your modem hum?

If so, you may want to know about The United Methodist Hymnal Software Edition announced recently by The United Methodist Publishing House.

With just a few key strokes on an IBM PC or compatible computer system anyone can not only display any given hymn in the hymnal but also play the tune and provide other information.

Jim Till, a United Methodist church musician in Champaign, Ill., who recently acquired the program, calls it "quite amazing."

He said that, beyond providing a quick way for the church music professional to access hymns related to particular Scriptures, "I won't have to sight-read or play the tune on the piano when I am looking at a hymn for a service."

The hymnal software includes three multiple-data-search program levels. The two upper-level programs require a hard disk drive; the other will run on a single or dual floppy drive system.

The most comprehensive program will search data including titles, composers, authors, theme, Scriptures, tune, meter, season and first line.

Once the information is found, the program displays hymn text and data, plays the melody, and lists all other hymns in the same search category.

History of Hymns

New translation led to magnificent hymn

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord:
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of His word;
*In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.**

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

In 1961 the New Testament of "The New English Bible" was published. Begun 15 years earlier, the new translation sought to employ "a contemporary idiom rather than reproduce the traditional 'biblical' English."

Timothy Dudley-Smith, then working with the Home Missionary Society of the Church of England, read the new translation with great excitement.

He found Mary's song (the Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55), which in the King James Version begins "My soul doth magnify the Lord," in the new translation beginning:

Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord.

Borrowing the new opening line, Dudley-Smith built a magnificent hymn of four stanzas, the first hymn to be inspired by "The New English Bible."

The worth and appeal of the hymn have been validated in that it now appears in more than 100 hymnals and collections.

For more than a quarter century, Dudley-Smith has been writing hymns that have stood in the forefront of current hymn writing. He has sought to reflect the purity of scriptural truth in contemporary language that is clear and understandable.

His sensitivity to human experiences and feelings comes from his own involvement as a Christian minister. His tenderness and sympathy, as well as his probing inquiry and exhortation, are found in his hymns.

There is great joy in singing "Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord." Sing it!

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"O Worship the King"

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methodist children's home news

METHODIST children's home

Terrel J. DeVille, Executive Director
August E. Aamodt, Director of Development

Printed Quarterly by The Methodist Children's Home, Ruston, Louisiana

training resource center

Continuing
Professional
Education
Workshop
and
Seminar
Program

September
August

METHODIST children's home
Ruston La

The Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston has for many years been concerned about the children referred to us who are unable to help because of a lack of space or limited professional staff members.

We house a maximum of 94 school age children. Unfortunately that is only one-third of all the children referred to us for care. One year we turned away over 500 children that we know we could help if we had the opportunity.

We have not accepted this situation as hopeless. This past year we have served and cared for the largest number of children in our history. We are always looking for new programs and services to meet the critical needs.

One of our programs, now 5 years old, is the Workshop and Seminar Program at our training resource center. Our Executive Director, Terrel DeVille says:

"The Louisiana Methodist Children's Home has for 85 years provided the necessary services for the ever-changing needs of children, youth and families in Louisiana. We are continuing to extend this effort through the introduction of our 1991-92 calendar of Continuing Professional Education. Through this development of workshops and seminars, our intent is to supply the necessary training for persons providing direct services to the children, youth and families of this area.

The Louisiana Methodist Children's Home extends to you a sincere invitation to participate in one or several of the seminars presented. **Child Care Administrators** and **Supervisors** who are faced with the ever-increasing demand for service accountability and limited resources will benefit. **Social workers, clinical psychologists, family therapists** will obtain new and additional knowledge and skills in providing therapeutic services to clients. **Personnel in school and the judicial system** who have direct contact with youth's families will benefit from a clear and concise interpretation of current social problems. The **child welfare worker** and **church professionals** are encouraged to broaden their awareness of services they can provide to families.

Interested parents and other concerned adults are invited to register and attend. We suggest you write for the "1991-92 Calendar."

Continuing Education Units are offered for each course through **Louisiana Tech University** and the **Louisiana Methodist Children's Home**, and can be obtained for a $5 fee in addition to the workshop fee. **Full-time students** may attend for a $10 fee per workshop.

We look forward to meeting with you throughout the 1991-92 year as we learn together new and better approaches to working with children, youth and families."

Terrel J. DeVille
Executive Director
Louisiana Methodist Children's Home

For more information and registration forms write:
August E. Aamodt
Director of Development
P.O. Box 929
Ruston, LA 71273-0929

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October 17, 1991
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Phil E. Quin, B.A. From Cal State
Master's in Theology

FAMILY VIOLENCE

October 18, 1991
8:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Methodist Children's Home
Ruston, LA

Spiritual DEVELOPMENT

ADOLESCENCE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

February 7, 1992
8:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
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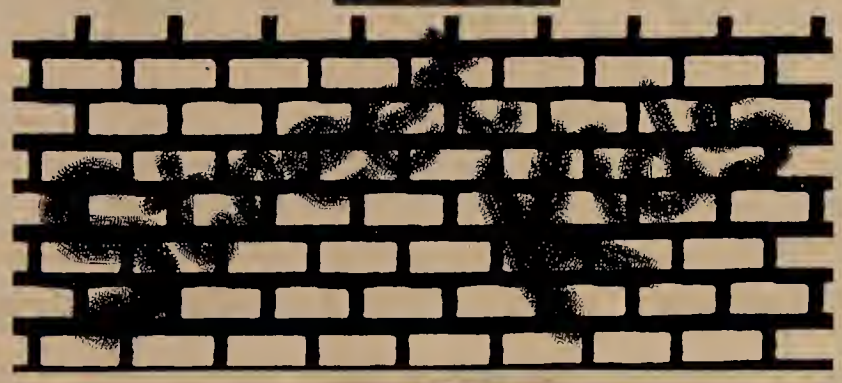
Ass't. Professor, Regis University, CO



The Rev. Doctor Bruce H. Wall,
B.A. in Theology, Master's, 1975

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March 26, 1992
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FAMILY

EMOTIONAL NEED: GROWING UP IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY

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Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

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Stewardship — A Way to Serve

This week's column is written by the Reverend Larry Stafford, president, Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

Mr. Stafford is pastor of First United Methodist Church in Bossier City.

A member of a former church gave her stewardship testimony one morning before we went house to house delivering our stewardship brochures. She said, "I consider it a privilege to serve my God by working in this stewardship campaign. It is a joy for me to know, too, that my giving enables God's work to be accomplished through the church that I love." What a beautiful witness!

This time of year, most of our churches are gearing up for financial campaigns and getting ready to adopt operating budgets. We have a tendency to get so caught up in the mechanics of the campaigns and the anxiety of the budget process that we lose sight of why we do what we are doing, and for whom we do it.

Two things come to mind. First, budgets represent people and our support of people in ministry. Whether through anticipated local expenditures or through what we call "conference apportionments," this is our way of meeting the needs of people and being in ministry for Christ throughout the world. Don't get so caught up in dollar figures that you forget that the Church exists for the sake of people. We are in the people business for Christ's sake.

Secondly, never apologize to anyone for being in a financial/stewardship campaign. You are simply assisting members to follow through with the commitment they once made to Christ and His Church. Think of it in terms of the fulfillment you can receive by being about our Lord's business in such a meaningful way. Be positive about what you do. It is contagious.

Have a great stewardship campaign. It is a privilege and a joy.

Larry Stafford

Lake Charles District to Host Educational Retreat

Dr. Lovett H. Weems, Jr., president of St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri, will be leading a continuing education event for ministers at the Uskichitto Retreat Center in the Lake Charles District, September 23-24, 1991. Each fall the Lake Charles District hosts a continuing education event for ministers focused on a current issue of ministry. This year Dr. Weems will be dealing with **Elements of Effective Leadership.**

This is especially timely for the Louisiana Conference since he talks about leadership in terms of vision, team, integrity and culture. Weems says, "Administration is doing things right. Management is doing the right things. Leadership, on the other hand, is the development and articulation of a shared vision, motivation of those key people without whom that vision cannot become a reality and gaining the cooperation of most of the people involved."

The retreat will begin at 10 a.m. Monday, September 23 and close with lunch on Tuesday, September 24. Bring your own sheets and towels. The cost is $25.00 and one Continuing Education Unit will be given.

MINISTER'S RETREAT
September 23-24, 1991

NAME _____ CHURCH _____

ADDRESS _____

FEE ENCLOSED ($25) _____
(Make checks payable to "Lake Charles District Office")

Please send your registration form to:
Lake Charles District Office, U.M.C.
816 Kirkman St.
Lake Charles, LA 70601
Bring your sheets and towels with you.

Music Workshop Scheduled

The Louisiana Fellowship is holding its annual fall workshop Saturday, October 5 at First United Methodist Church, Alexandria, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The $15 registration fee includes lunch.

Five training sessions and a worship service led by the Reverend John Winn will be on the information-packed agenda.

The sessions include: training in choreography for children and adults led by Ms. Rosalie Branigan, "The Care and Feeding of Your Local Church Volunteer" led by Ms. Linda Kersey, "Propers and Ordinaries" led by the Reverend John Winn, "Organeze for the Choir Director" led by Mr. McCoy Ransom, working with handbell ensembles led by Ms. Pam Emory, training in youth choirs and choir tours led by Mrs. Esther Socolofsky, and working with senior adult choirs led by Mr. Gale Meyer. October 1 is the registration deadline.

REGISTRATION — THE LOUISIANA FELLOWSHIP
FALL RETREAT
FEE: $15.00 — INCLUDES LUNCH

Please return by Oct. 1 to: Linda Kersey, Broadmoor U.M.C., 10230 Mollylea Dr., Baton Rouge LA 70815

Name _____

Church _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Member of the Fellowship
____ Yes ____ No; ____ Enclosed ____ Will pay at the Door

Louisiana Area Churches Reach Out in Mission

'Friends of Families' sparks caring ministry in Baton Rouge District churches and their congregations

When four Baton Rouge churches — University, Neely, Wesley and First — formed the South Baton Rouge Cooperative Parish (SBRCP) in 1989, a great outreach ministry was set in motion.

Shortly thereafter, SBRCP joined with another church, the Volunteers of America/Baton Rouge (VOA), to form "Friends of Families/Baton Rouge." Their combined mission is to help homeless families with children become self-reliant and sufficient. The key ingredient in the plan requires volunteers recruited from churches to commit to a long-term, caring relationship in order to help the families become stabilized and independent.

In 1990, both the VOA/BA and the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority submitted applications for funds for transitional housing for these families to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

To the surprise of some, both grants were approved and at least 57 housing units were funded, provided there was evidence that progress was taking place through the efforts of the people involved and the volunteers working with them. In December of 1990, the Baton Rouge Council of Ministries undergirded the SBRCP-VOA/BR's work by voting to assume responsibility for "Friends of Families/Baton Rouge" as a district ministry.

Mr. Roger Guissinger, former Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and Human Resources and a United Methodist layman, is coordinator of this ministry for the SBRCP. He and his wife Gayle are one of seven teams composed of two or more persons each, who are currently involved with seven families in the "Friends of Families" project. Mr. Guissinger says that their team has worked on furnishing the target family's apartment, has gotten clothes for their children and has spent many hours with the school that the children attend in order to help the children contend with the challenges of academic life.

He and the other volunteers meet once a month to discuss their purpose and devise ways to enable the target families to use their full potential. He says that primarily, however, "we meet to remember who we are and why we are doing this."

Mr. Guissinger is also impressed with the way Sunday school classes and other church resource groups have rallied around the teams. "The people are coming out of the woodwork to help," he says.

The Reverend Betsy Irvine, director of the CCOM-related CrossLines Ministries which supports the work of "Friends of Families," echoed Mr. Guissinger's assessment of the churches' response. She says that it creates an atmosphere among the churches of "fellowship, community and joint mission."

Mrs. Irvine is so impressed with the work in Baton Rouge, in fact, that CrossLines is using "Friends of Families" as a model for their interfaith outreach ministry in Franklin. She gives Mr. Guissinger credit for its success as well. "Roger," she states, "gives and gives and gives some more. He is to be commended for his persistence, energy and vision in this wonderful way of plugging people back into a caring social network."

Other Baton Rouge District churches are showing interest in the cooperative. Jefferson, Ingleside, Broadmoor and St. John United Methodist Churches, for example, have requested information on the project. Mr. Guissinger hopes to have fifty more teams from the different congregations in place in the next eight or nine months. There is therefore a pressing need for many more churches to become involved.

Please call Mr. Guissinger at 504-766-3043; the Reverend Tim Lawson at 504-344-9100; or Dr. George Calvin Sr. at 504-346-1646 if you can help or for further information on this remarkable opportunity for mission and ministry.

Monthly Meeting of the 'Friends of Families' Volunteers

Front row, l. to r., Mrs. Dorothy Conrad, the Rev. Lorris Wimberly, Mr. Bill Coffey, Mr. Bud Snowden, Mr. Allen Kinney, and Mrs. Nancy Miller. Back row, l. to r., the Rev. Betsy Irvine, Mr. Bert Lent, Mrs. Toni Lent, Mrs. Lynn Jackson, Mrs. Wilma Crosby, the Rev. Tom Crosby, Mr. Melvin Jupiter, Mr. Roger Guissinger and the Rev. Tim Lawson.

Alexandria churches provide foundation for five creative outreach ministries for people in need

Angel Care, an early intervention program for infants and toddlers, is the latest of efforts of First United Methodist Church, Alexandria, to be proactive in addressing needs and ills in Central Louisiana. Over the past decade five specific ministries have been piloted by members of the church with leadership of the Social and Ecumenical Concerns Commission. Dr. Henry Blount is Senior Pastor.

One of the programs, Shepherd Center is a community-supported "ministry of last resorts" offering assistance to individuals in need which cannot be addressed by other groups and agencies. Now supported by 48 churches and two synagogues, Shepherd Center was piloted three years ago at First United Methodist Church, Trinity United Methodist Church and four other area churches.

Two programs now under Shepherd Center were originally piloted at First UMC: Christmas Cheer for Children and Care and Share. Christmas Cheer computerizes the names of children in need of Christmas presents and acts as the clearinghouse for all churches and civic groups wishing to help meet the needs. Over 4,000 children are helped annually.

Care and Share is a summer church-based tutoring program for children at risk of failure residing within a one-mile radius of the church facility. Church members from Junior High level through Senior Citizens provide tutoring, role modeling and mentoring to address individual needs.

Hope House, another ministry was, co-sponsored by Alexandria First UMC with the Episcopal Church. It is a homeless shelter for forty women and children. Life skills, schooling, transitional housing and many other needs are addressed for this very successful ministry.

Angel Care grew out of the need to coordinate a total program for needs of disabled infants and toddlers and their families. Private and public resources are used to meet needs without duplication of services. Complete cooperation has been achieved with all the agencies mandated to provide services for these children. The Tracy Arnold Center provides a first-class environment for evaluation, center-based services, parent clinic services as well as home based services. Parents are recognized as the primary care givers and services are determined in family/staff conferences. All programs are family oriented.

A nursery school for children eighteen months to three years old includes children with special needs and typical children who serve as role models. Special education teachers, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist and speech therapist incorporate the various therapies into the activities any other nursery school would provide. Seasonal and holiday activities focus at levels these children can achieve. Similar services are taken to the homes of younger children and those children unable to come to the center.

July 23, 1991, thirty-seven children who had reached their third birthdays and were planning to enter public school special education programs for non-categorical handicapped children received certificates of completion. In this group "miracles" had happened when levels of achievement surpassed the most educated assessments for potentials.

First Church, Alexandria, highly recommends the piloting and modeling method for addressing the needs of people in the local community. Not only has this proved to be effective in the quality of organization and level of services, but it has involved the entire membership in mission in ways for constructive change which can be experienced and appreciated by everyone concerned.

Anyone seeking additional information about these programs may contact FUMC, Alexandria at 318-443-5696 or Mrs. Joanne White at 318-443-1349.

Rev. Beverly E. Bond Memorial Scholarship Awarded

The first Reverend Beverly E. Bond Memorial Scholarship was awarded August 11, 1991, to Ms. Leigh Ann Boston. The $700 scholarship was presented during the morning worship service at Jefferson United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

Ms. Boston, a member of First United Methodist Church in Lake Charles, is currently a sophomore at Centenary College in Shreveport. Her major is Christian Education.

The Reverend Beverly E. Bond Scholarship is an endowed scholarship administered by Jefferson UMC. The program is designed to help students entering church-related vocations.

Mr. Bond served more than 42 years in the Louisiana Annual Conference at numerous churches including Calhoun, Downsville, Bird's Chapel, Marion, Athens and Crossroads. Others were Bethel, Wesley Chapel, Farmerville, Sulphur, Springhill and Sarepta. He also served on several conference and district boards and committees.

Contributions toward the scholarship can be mailed to Jefferson UMC, 10328 Jefferson Highway, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.

Youth special page on page 6.
(page 5 in local editions)

Pictured l. to r. are: Mrs. Beverly E. (Marie) Bond; Ms. Boston; Mrs. Mary Boston, mother of the recipient; and Mrs. Beverly Bond Powell.

Editorial

Billy Graham, the NCC and us

Evangelist Billy Graham's recent visit to the National Council of Churches' headquarters was "small news" compared to the grand drama of events unfolding in the Soviet Union (see UMR, Sept. 6).

We believe, however, that the cordial meeting between Dr. Graham and the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, NCC chief executive, has a "big news" implication for both the world stage and for smaller arenas, including local churches.

Dr. Graham hinted as much in his remarks to NCC staff members.

"The world looks on us and sees our divisions and our problems and they make fun of [them] and they're turned off by [them]" he said.

He was referring, of course, to divisions within the Body of Christ, including conflicts, both real and perceived, between supporters of Dr. Graham and backers of the NCC.

We agree with his assessment.

That assessment is particularly pertinent in a world rent by conflict and division. It raises a troubling question: How can Christians persuasively proclaim God's will for peace, at home or abroad, when we ourselves remain unreconciled to each other?

Hence the "important implication" of Dr. Graham's and Dr. Campbell's conciliatory meeting: The entire community of faith is strengthened by their mutual willingness, indeed eagerness, publicly to affirm each other's witness and to link arms in reaching out to people in the Soviet Union.

Such gestures by prominent leaders from traditionally opposing theological camps offer potent examples to the world of Christian love and cooperation.

Furthermore, they challenge others of us who identify with one camp or the other—that is, with Graham-style evangelism or NCC-style ecumenism—to reassess our attitudes toward each other and to make common cause for Christ.

Indeed, as the spiritual and physical needs of people in the Soviet Union and elsewhere become increasingly urgent, divisions among Christians that hinder our witness to a transformed life in Christ are all the more intolerable breaches of God's will.

Hence, we both should applaud Billy Graham and Joan Campbell for pointing us beyond such divisions toward a "more excellent way" and take active steps to follow their example.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Evangelist Billy Graham recently met with the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, chief executive of the National Council of Churches. The entire community of faith is strengthened by their mutual willingness, indeed eagerness, publicly to affirm each other's witness.

My Witness

Mission to 'special children' begins at home

By SUZANNE K. WERNETT

I recently was asked to be a "helper" in the Sunbeams Sunday morning class. This class is composed of special/gifted children of various ages.

Now, I have been a member of our congregation for several years. I've been fully aware of the Sunbeams class, the many years it has existed as part of the Sunday school and the very capable teachers who are there each Sunday to teach this special group.

However, I must admit, I never would have volunteered to help on my own. I thought, "why, I don't have the background that certainly would be needed to assist with this class." I could have told you at least ten reasons why I wasn't even interested.

Most important, however, was the fact that I would have to give up my own Sunday school class. So where would I receive nourishment?

I'm aware that whenever I have a conflict such as this, I know full-well the Lord is "calling." So, I gave up and decided to give it a try. As you can imagine, the Sunbeams class members—sometimes we have as many as 10—ministered and nurtured me more times than I can begin to count.

As soon as you walk in the door, they are there with smiles, hugs, and so much happiness just to see you—the wonderful unconditional love I so often have talked about.

We begin our opening exercises with singing, some not being able to join in, but we are all doing the best we can. Then we have the offering and our lesson.

You don't have to be trained to be with this special group, as I had first thought. We often talk and remember Robbie, a member of the class who died recently and sing his favorite song. A beautiful garden has been dedicated in his memory by the Sunbeams Class.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if each church had a Sunbeams Class. So often I look for "mission" outside of the church. What a wonderful mission outreach in our own backyard. I'm sure the "makings of a class" are in each town across the country if we're willing to pursue such a mission.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Suzanne K. Wernett is a member of First United Methodist Church, Bangor, Pa. (Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Interpretive Analysis

A good model for handling church conflict

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

The moment was unforgettable.

United Methodist layman William Lux of Manchester, Iowa, was struggling to express his deeply held beliefs that homosexual practice is contrary to Christian teaching.

Cynthia B. Astle

When he proposed words to be added to the final report of the Committee to Study Homosexuality, the Rev. Tex Sample of Kansas City, Mo., an outspoken advocate for the acceptance of gays and lesbians, jumped in quickly.

"I don't think you want to say that, Bill, because I don't think it represents your position strongly enough," Dr. Sample said. "What I think you want to say is that homosexual practice is contrary to Christian teaching because it contradicts God's expressed will for human good."

Those in the meeting room at Lake Junaluska, N.C., broke into gales of appreciative laughter at the irony of one advocate helping an advocate of an opposing position express his viewpoint.

Affection, respect shown

Three days later, Bishop Richard C. Looney (South Georgia Area), summed up the Christian affection and respect that has grown among members of the churchwide Committee to Study Homosexuality.

"I want you to know how serious a moment this is for me," the bishop said in a voice choked with emotion. "Often in other parts of the church, my suggestions are seen as subterfuge just because I'm a Southern bishop. It means a great deal to have my words considered with such respect."

Bishop Looney's words cast into high relief what may be the greatest service that the homosexuality study committee has performed for The United Methodist Church—how to disagree, often deeply, without making demons of one another.

Specifically, the study committee's grueling three-year process provides a worthy example of how United Methodists and all Christians should relate to one another when dealing with controversial moral issues such as homosexuality.

Three key learnings from the committee's experience merit notice:

✓ Techniques of conflict resolution, while difficult to practice, can greatly reduce polarization over emotional controversy-laden issues.

Throughout their process, committee members worked hard at practicing such techniques. For example, they listened to one another in non-judgmental fashion and avoided posturing on their individual, deeply held convictions.

These techniques promoted understanding on both sides of the issue. Committee members learned about each other as individuals, about the viewpoints each held and about the "blind spots" in their personal views.

Such methods of avoiding dehumanizing conflict, however imperfect, can enable thoughtful Christians to hold opposing viewpoints on an issue without compromising their common faith.

Struggling with each other

✓ Holding strongly professed opinions on a given topic should not preclude Christians from struggling with one another about moral issues related to that topic.

Engaging in dialogue does not automatically mean that one must "sell out" one's deeply held spiritual and moral beliefs. For example, the committee's list of disagreements clearly points out that its members are aware that much more discussion remains on the topic of homosexuality; people were not compelled to abandon their principled convictions (see UMR, Sept. 6).

Among other things, the list of disagreements reflects the committee's efforts to be scrupulously fair-minded in acknowledging differing viewpoints on the issue of homosexuality.

Maintaining such an atmosphere of "disagreeing in love" enables both sides in a conflict to acknowledge their respective shortcomings, as well as to confess that all human knowledge remains imperfect.

✓ Worshipping together despite disagreements promotes a sense of Christian unity that transcends the deepest divisions.

Committee members joined in daily communal worship during their meetings and took turns leading prayer.

Such interaction, especially when it includes sharing personal stories of faith, is a powerful way to remind ourselves of God's presence in our lives, of our shared identity as Christ's followers, and to promote understanding, respect and care for one another.

Commendable ideal

The closing statement of the committee's report, titled "The Need for Greater Openness and Humility, offers a commendable ideal for any of us in the church involved in efforts to deal with the agonizing spiritual and moral issues of our day:

"We have gone about our work fairly and honestly, but it has not always been easy. Sometimes our discussions have become heated. In the end we found that it is possible to disagree earnestly with one another without breaking the bonds of a growing mutual respect and affection.

"We have also learned together that we do not have to have all of the answers to questions before us in order to keep faith with our profession as Christians. We have had to acknowledge that many of the uncertainties cannot yet be overcome and that many of the perceived certainties cannot be supported.

"But that may, in itself, have a message for the church. Perhaps we can be less polarized in our discussions on this issue, more humble about our own positions, and more open to the human realities in our midst."

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Acts 7:58)

Readings for week of Sept. 16

Monday: Psalms 125
Tuesday: Psalms 126
Wednesday: Proverbs 22:1-2,8-9
Thursday: Proverbs 22:17-25
Friday: Mark 8:27-38
Saturday: James 2:1-5, 8-10
Sunday: James 2:14-17

Letters to the Editor

Clergywomen analysis raises readers' eyebrows

In reference to the Aug. 23 interpretive analysis by Stephen L. Swecker headlined, "Clergywomen 'steppin' out: The reformers of our time?", I'd like to say that the headline was very inappropriate.

According to the article, a significant number of United Methodist clergywomen apparently would like to "step out" away from the foundations of the Christian church.

I was amazed to read that "some clergywomen said they routinely downplay references to Jesus and Christ." I wonder if they've ever read 1 Timothy 2:5-6 or John 11:25-26. But then, if the authority of Scripture and Christian tradition is replaced by "being informed by Spirit-fed feelings, intuition and story-telling," I guess those verses aren't particularly relevant anyway.

God save the church from those who would put the teachings of Jesus and his apostles up for a popularity vote.

Neal Gerhart
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Tragedy lies ahead

Re: "Clergywomen 'steppin' out" by Stephen L. Swecker (see UMR, Aug. 23):

Lest the United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation in their exuberance fail to heed Mr. Swecker's warning about undisciplined "diversity," there will be tragedy for our church.

Mr. Swecker forthrightly asserts that a "key concern will be how to preserve the theological integrity of the church."

At the meeting of the U.M. Clergywomen's Consultation, "masculine imagery in reference to God did not prevail but was nearly absent . . ."

If "diversity" is more important than theological discipline, heresy lies ahead. Those who will not defend the Christian faith will witness the chaos of diversity.

John C. Appel
Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

What's next?

After reading "Clergy Women steppin' out," I have to wonder, what next (see UMR, August 23)?

I am appalled at the present priorities. As if we did not have enough to be appalled about, the article goes on to mention "being informed by Spirit-fed feelings" that could challenge scriptural primacy in discerning God's will.

What this means is that the "Holy Spirit" talks to the minister, and the minister will tell us what the Holy Spirit told her. My reply is that I only take direct instructions from the Holy Spirit in the Queen's English.

I am afraid that what is happening is that the proponents of the present priorities cannot find justification for their appalling priorities in Scripture, mostly because they are in error. They will now find justification from the "Holy Spirit" who, of course, will only speak to them.

Robert Underwood
Springfield, Massachusetts

Can they do no wrong?

Re: "Clergywomen 'steppin' out":

Stephen L. Swecker might reexamine why, for him, women can do nothing wrong and why, for him, the traditions of the church are so indiscriminately open to change.

Norman Moon
Manitou Springs, Colorado

'Stand' criticized

The Aug. 30 "Here I Stand" appeal for support to Nicaragua would have been much more magnetic had it not been used as a platform to launch an anti-American diatribe replete with unfounded allegations and unsupported inuendo.

For example, the introductory statement that ". . . the U.S. government used our money without our permission to destroy Nicaragua" has yet to be confirmed after spending millions on months and months of independent investigation.

The implication that the Nicaraguan conflict was the work of "Pentagon planners" is ludicrous. Wars are neither planned nor declared by the "Pentagon," which only performs as instructed by proper authority.

Our government is far from perfect, with a history of a few "rotten apples" here and there in all three branches. But history also supports the proposition that ours is the best government in the best country in the world. Witness the attraction it has for people from all over the world.

Let us not denigrate our government in an effort to enhance our plea for succor. Let us not resort to the use of disinformation and questionable assertions as justification for our plea. Such an approach may result in a backlash.

Sam Miller
Tullahoma, Tennessee

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Faith watch

SOVIET CHILDREN TO VISIT: Sixteen Soviet children exposed to radiation during the Chernobyl nuclear accident will be examined at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond. Their trip was arranged by the Joint Committee on Humanitarian Cooperation—recently formed by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and Soviet Peace Fund—and the Christian Children's Fund. The children, all from Minsk, and 6 to 15 years old, arrived in Richmond Sept. 10 with their three adult chaperones. They will stay with 11 families from six United Methodist churches.

OLYMPICS WITNESS: A task force of United Methodist clergy and laity is expected to be named soon to plan a Christian witness during the 1996 Olympic Games and other major sports events. An interim committee has been meeting since March under leadership of United Methodist Bishop **Ernest A. Fitzgerald** of Atlanta to prepare for the task force's work. The United Methodists will work in cooperation with an ecumenical coalition known as "Quest Atlanta '96."

Ernest Fitzgerald

THOMAS OPPOSED: National Council of Churches officers and representatives decided last week to oppose the nomination of **Clarence Thomas** to the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision was based in part on a 15-page analysis of Mr. Thomas' judicial and public-service career citing more than a dozen occasions when Mr. Thomas acted against legal precedents. The analysis was prepared by the Rev. **Dean M. Kelley** of the NCC staff. The decision marks the third time the NCC has opposed a U.S. Supreme Court nominee since 1950. Previously the NCC opposed the nominations of **Robert H. Bork** and **G. Harold Carswell.**

BIBLE STUDIES CORRECTED: United Methodism's unofficial evangelical caucus has responded to a statement in the church's Adult Bible Studies series saying that group wants to separate from The United Methodist Church. The Rev. **James V. Heidinger II,** editor and executive secretary of "Good News" magazine, said "Contrary to the Aug. 25 lesson of the United Methodist 'Adult Bible Studies,' separation from The United Methodist Church has never been a part of the Good News agenda. We have said for 24 years that we are a renewal movement within The United Methodist Church and that has never changed."

Evangelist: Turmoil readies Soviets for Gospel

Layman in U.S.S.R. at time of coup attempt says those without faith 'were devastated'

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

As the last folds of the Iron Curtain fall, the heretofore shrouded work being carried out in the Soviet Union by United Methodists has become unveiled.

With that unveiling has emerged evidence that the political and economic turmoil in that country has prepared the Soviet people to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Those assessments come from a lay evangelist, Joe Holland of Carrollton, Texas, who was in the Komi Republic, between Russia and the Arctic Circle, at the time of the attempt to oust Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Like other recent stories of United Methodist work in Sverdlovsk, Russia, and Parnu, Estonia, (see UMR, June 21 and Aug. 30 respectively), the story of Mr. Holland's newly established ministry in Syktyvkar, Komi, recounts the flowering of a spiritual seed planted years ago.

Took shape in 1989

Mr. Holland was a successful attorney in 1989 when he began actively to heed a five-year-old urging to become an evangelist to the Soviet Union.

While Mr. Holland was beginning his studies in Russian language and culture and the works of John Wesley, a Komi minister half a world away was seeking to join hands with the Christian church in the West.

The Rev. Vasily Popov of Syktyvkar, Komi, applied for United Methodist affiliation for his small independent Christian congregation some 800 miles northeast of Moscow. The Komi Republic extends well into the Arctic Circle and marks the northeastern edge of the Soviet Union's European area.

Mr. Popov's application went to the Rev. Olav Parnaments, superintendent of the United Methodist Church in Estonia. (The Komi people are related linguistically and ethnically to the Estonians, Finns and Laplanders).

Through local contacts in Komi established by Mr. Parnaments and with the assistance of Bishop Hans Vaxby (Northern Europe Area), Mr. Holland and Mr. Popov met for the first time in February.

After what Mr. Holland, 44, described as an "intense" visit with Mr. Popov, then well into his 80s, Mr. Holland returned to the United States to arrange funding and resources for evangelism outreach in Komi.

Two weeks after the two men met, Mr. Popov died.

Becomes 'home base'

Now led by one of Mr. Popov's sons, the Syktyvkar congregation has become "home base" for Mr. Holland's increasingly frequent trips to Komi.

During his third trip there in August, he visited prisons and a children's hospital to distribute Bibles and share his witness to the Gospel.

Thus he and his two co-workers were caught up in the atmosphere surrounding the attempted Soviet coup.

"Those with faith trusted God," Mr. Holland said of the Komi people's reaction to the news. "Those without faith were quite stricken.

"Our translator from the University of Syktyvkar, for instance, was devastated because she was afraid her association with us could mean trouble for her under a new regime."

The lay evangelist, who is assigned to his work by Bishop Vaxby, said he saw signs throughout his travels of the Soviet people's readiness to hear the Gospel.

"People weep when you hand them Christian literature," Mr. Holland said.

"For some years now [under Mr. Gorbachev's government], the Soviet people have been hearing from their government that what their country needs is a rebirth of morality and that such rebirth can come from a variety of resources—including spiritual rebirth."

Mr. Holland now hopes to establish a formal relationship with the General Board of Global Ministries that will enable the printing and distribution of Scriptures and other Christian literature in the Komi language.

In the meantime, Mr. Holland said he intends to continue his privately arranged, privately funded ministry known officially as "United Methodists in Mission to the Soviet Union." His next trip is planned for October.

"One of my co-workers and I were talking about how easily we felt at home among the Komi people, living in their houses, shopping in their stores, sharing the adventure that is life in the Soviet Union," he said.

"We agreed that we had never felt so happy, so close to heaven, as we did standing there in four feet of snow in Syktyvkar. We definitely had a strong sense of God being at work in everything."

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE HOLLAND

UHKTA, Komi Republic—United Methodist lay evangelist Joe Holland of Carrollton, Texas gives Russian-language Bibles to young patients in a children's hospital. Mr. Holland began a ministry to the Arctic republic in the Soviet Union earlier this year and was in the U.S.S.R. during the recent attempt to oust Mikhail Gorbachev.

Soviet corruption a danger when sending aid

Reporter Staff Special

As much as Christians in the West want to aid the Soviet people during their time of turmoil, the worst thing they could do would be to send large amounts of goods to the U.S.S.R. without taking care to see to how and where they're sent.

That warning comes from a United Methodist lay evangelist familiar with widespread corruption in the Soviet Union.

Joe Holland of Carrollton, Texas, has been to the U.S.S.R. three times this year. Each trip, he said, provided evidence that black-market and bureaucratic corruption poses a serious threat to the effectiveness of Western aid.

"In Syktyvkar, Komi [where he works], the local officials have been very welcoming," Mr. Holland said. "In Moscow, the bureaucrats won't even look at me until they literally see the color of my money."

Because of problems of corruption and distribution, Mr. Holland advises local congregations to establish private, church-to-church or person-to-person relationships before sending donations.

One such example is the cooperative agreement recently arranged by the General Board of Global Ministries, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Peace Fund, a private humanitarian organization.

"It's important to get names, addresses and telephone numbers before you send anything or go there," Mr. Holland stressed.

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

Arkansas clergy targeted by IRS over self-employed status

By JANE DENNIS

LITTLE ROCK—At least eight United Methodist pastors in Arkansas have been questioned about their self-employed tax filing status by the Internal Revenue Service.

"It's been six months since they first notified me," said the Rev. Roger Beal, pastor of Sequoyah United Methodist Church in Fayetteville. "It's been kind of stressful."

Mr. Beal received a letter from the IRS stating "an adjustment may be necessary" regarding his self-employed filing status. He responded with a request for a hearing before a U.S. tax court.

Also challenged

Also challenged has been the self-employed status of the Rev. Gary Goldman, director for three years of the Wesley Foundation at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

Mr. Goldman said he believes the IRS is attempting to "set a precedent" in its Memphis Region by "challenging the church."

Ministers from several different denominations are being questioned about their filing status, Mr. Goldman noted. "I was talking (on the phone) with an IRS agent and I asked him if he knew I am a United Methodist.

"He said yes, he was aware of that, and that the IRS disagrees with the church's stand that pastors are self-employed. From that statement, I believe the IRS is especially challenging the church on this," Mr. Goldman added.

Bishop notified

Bishop Richard B. Wilke (Arkansas Area) has been notified of the eight IRS inquiries. He said that the inquiries are being handled individually.

The United Methodist Church contends that a local church pastor assigned to a congregation through the appointive system meets all the criteria of a self-employed person. That implies that they are not called or hired by local churches, they cannot be fired, and their hours are not set by the local church.

"The IRS is saying that, like congregational ministers, we are employees of the church. The United Methodist Church disagrees. We are a connectional system," Mr. Beal said.

The question of self-employed filing status is not new to the church. At least 15 pastors in the North Carolina Annual (regional) Conference were notified in late 1990 that their expense deductions as self-employed persons would not be allowed. Bishop Roy I. Sano of the Denver Area faced a similar legal tax battle last year.

Craig R. Hoskins, a legal counsel for the General Council on Finance and Administration, told "Newscope," a weekly newsletter for church leaders, that while some clergy status cases have been tried and ruled upon, the decisions are not binding in other cases.

"Congress could solve this problem by simply declaring that all clergy are self-employed or employed for purposes of income tax," Mr. Hoskins said.

Jane Dennis is editor of the Arkansas United Methodist newspaper.

Ministers fear losses to financial planner

Religious News Service

RICHMOND, Va.—State investigators have begun looking into charges that nearly 100 ministers may have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars to a financial planner who, the clerics say, took their money but left them owing federal and state taxes he was supposed to pay.

The investigators also are looking into allegations that the financial company, Wellspring Associates, Inc. of Charlottesville, Va., failed to make payments on insurance policies the firm sold to the ministers.

The company's president, Charles Wesley Weir, the son of a United Methodist minister, was unavailable for comment.

The Rev. Anthony C. Busic, pastor of the Orange Circuit of United Methodist churches in Orange County, said he discovered something wrong in June when he received a bill from the Internal Revenue Service for unpaid taxes during 1990.

He then checked with state authorities and found out his state taxes had not been paid. In all, he said, he owes $3,000.

In an arrangement that apparently was common between Wellspring and participating ministers, mostly United Methodists, the company had access to a church's or circuit's bank accounts. Wellspring, founded by Mr. Weir in 1988, received a monthly fee to take care of paying bills and taxes.

Wichita UMs assert 'no easy answers' on abortion

United Methodist News Service

"No easy answers."

That's the conclusion of a number of United Methodist clergy in and around Wichita, Kan., as reactions to the complex abortion issue there continue to make national headlines.

Resolving the problems of polarization of church and larger community on abortion and other issues is being addressed by area clergy in newsletter columns and in sermons, in prayers for all involved, and in exhortations to church members to avoid the temptation to condemn the differing views of fellow Christians.

Chose sermon title

When the Rev. Mark Conard stepped to the pulpit of Pleasant Valley United Methodist Church in Wichita after an absence of three weeks, he chose "No Easy Answers" as the title of his sermon.

Among his church members is the attorney who filed the brief, later denied, asking a federal appeals court to block U.S. Judge Patrick Kelly's order forbidding "Operation Rescue," an organized effort by anti-abortion protesters to block access to Wichita abortion clinics.

But Mr. Conard also recognizes other, divergent views of the church population. It is that conflicting opinion he and other clergy have attempted to address while the storm of controversy rages about them.

The Rev. Thomas Smith Jr., senior pastor at Wichita's Asbury United Methodist Church, was among local pastors who chose to reproduce the United Methodist Social Principles statement in their church bulletins. It says in part, "we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures."

Avoid 'de-Christianizing'

Although he says he considers himself "pretty pro-life," Mr. Smith included a personal statement pointing out that "our church is a very diverse and pluralistic people," and he continues to emphasize the need to avoid "de-Christianizing" others.

Complexity and confusion apparently continue to reign, even among clergy who attempt to lead their flocks toward settling differences of opinion. Apparent consensus, however, seems to center on finding peaceful resolution of the volatile issue.

Polarization at issue

A call for "peace in our community" is seen as step toward that resolution by 54 Religious Leaders for Choice (RLC), including 34 United Methodists, who issued a plea to "Operation Rescue" to "leave this issue in the good hands of Wichita area leaders."

Co-chairman of RLC is the Rev. George T. Gardner, senior pastor of College Hill United Methodist Church in Wichita, and one of the city's most visible pro-choice clergy.

The letter asked church members "in a prayerful spirit . . . to begin now to talk with family members, friends and neighbors so that communication can help you defuse the emotions surrounding the abortion debate" and closed with a plea "to join together to bring order and the spirit of love and cooperation to our city."

This story is based on information provided by Kathy Kruger Noble, editor of the Kansas West Annual Conference edition of the biweekly United Methodist Review.

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Faith connections

MOVING?: United Methodism's largest congregation may be moving soon from its longtime downtown site. A long range planning committee for the nearly 14,000-member First United Methodist Church of Houston has endorsed relocating the church to a site about six miles west, near the geographic center of its membership. Original plans to expand at its downtown site were changed by the results of the study, said the Rev. **William H. Hinson**, senior pastor. The congregation has begun exploring site possibilities.

ORGAN FUND BENEFITS: One family's unusual collection of arts-related books, stamps and Civil War-related documents is helping raise money for organ and sound system renovation at St. John's United Methodist Church in Miami Beach, Fla. Longtime dance instructor **Rita Fithian** and her son, **Douglas**, donated the collection for sale at auction. Church officials said they expected the sale to net $10,000. The late Mr. Fithian was an actor and playwright in Hollywood and taught drama in Florida.

HOSPITAL LEADER: The president and chief executive officer of The Methodist Hospital System of Houston has been named chairman-elect designate of the American Hospital Association. **Larry Mathis** begins a three-year term as an association officer on Jan. 1. In 1993, he will become chairman of the 25-member board of trustees, the major policy-making authority of the organization. In 1994, he will serve as speaker of the association's House of Delegates, the organization's representative body.

HELP FOR EAST ANGOLA: The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries' World Division has released $20,000 in program funds to the United Methodist Church in East Angola to assist that church in regrouping after a membership split, financial problems and the effects of a long-term civil war (see UMR, Aug. 2.) The money will be used for supplies and to help pay salaries owed to pastors in the war-torn area, missions officials said. In addition, a retired missionary is being sent to help set up accounting procedures and train a treasurer.

HELP IN APPALACHIA: The Appalachia Service Project Inc., related to the church's General Board of Discipleship, recently received $175,000 from the Kresge Foundation to provide housing for Central Appalachians. Founded in 1969 by the Rev. **Glenn "Tex" Evans**, the project has used more than 65,000 volunteers from all over the U.S. in building or repairing 6,500 homes.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS: **Michael Kinnamon**, 42, recently nominated as next president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has United Methodist connections that continue from his youth. Since 1988, he has served as a voting member of the United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. This is under a reciprocal agreement which allows for membership by non-United Methodists on the denonimation's principal ecumenical agency.

IS TEN A RECORD?: Relatives of **Marguerite Pollock**, who died recently at age 82, believe that her familial ties to 10 United Methodist ministers may be a record. She was the wife of one, daughter of one, daughter-in-law of another, mother of four, sister of one and sister-in-law of two. Total: 10.

'Hola Mexico!' provides UM-college work team with unique view south of the border

By JOCK LAUTERER

DURANGO, Mexico—It was a moonlit night in the mountains of northwest Mexico.

In the outdoor church service, songs were accompanied only by clapping hands, a tambourine and a single primitive guitar. The worshipping Mexican youth were joined by eight students from United Methodist-related Brevard College in Brevard, N.C.

The North American youth and three adult leaders were working in this remote setting to embody the college's motto: "Learn So That You May Serve."

Spirited volleyball

With the conclusion of the simple church service, the benches were cleared and the worshippers from both countries broke into a spirited vollyball game.

The game was held in the same setting where the U.S. students had earlier mowed grass, swept up trash, raked rubble and painted backboards, benches and doors in Nombre de Dios, a church camp outside Durango.

The 15-day work, service and intense language study program was the fifth such group sent by Brevard College in the two years since President William T. Greer initiated the concept of education through community, national and international service.

Now, through Project Inside-Out, Brevard College students perform a minimum of 30 hours of service as a part of their graduation requirements from the two-year college.

This spring's trip—dubbed "Hola Mexico!"—was a return trip to Durango, a 400-year-old city.

The student work team spent four days teaching English to elementary school children at the Collegio MacDonell, a private school started by Methodists, and sharing games with high-school students.

They also worked on the home of 90-year-old Senora Lucita, whom the 1989 Brevard College work team had adopted as Abuelita, their "beloved little granny."

The senora, who used to have to beg for her living, told the students, "I thank God for bringing all these little angels to me."

Atlanta freshman Cabe Vinson was impressed with the old woman.

"She had so much history in her face," he noted.

The students spent time working on their Spanish language skills by attending Mexican church services delivered entirely in Spanish and by shopping in the native markets.

They also made friends with dozens of Mexican churchgoers, school children and teachers.

Cultural awareness

The Brevard students gained additional cultural awareness by visiting area museums, enjoying a typically Mexican pinata party and dancing to a local mariachi band.

Brevard native Jennifer Morrow said she was pleased that her Spanish was so effective.

"I also found out that after I really listened to the people I could understand them," she said.

Ms. Morrow had a special reason for going to Mexico. In Durango she met the two Mexican girls who will room with her at Brevard next fall.

Brevard graduate Mitzi Troutman from Mocksville, N.C., observed, "I learned how cultural barriers can be conquered and that acceptance can make the worst situations tolerable."

The alleviation of poverty will have to begin "with an open mind and a change of heart," she said.

"After this trip, I will never look at life the same way and take so much for granted."

Mr. Lauterer is director of public information for Brevard College.

DURANGO, Mexico—The faces tell the story of friendship across the border, as Brevard (N.C.) College students give their services during a language study trip last spring. Right, a rickety wooden ladder provides a perch for Brevard freshman William Greer III as he puts down the first paint this old basketball backboard has ever seen. Below, freshman Alejandro Hernandez of Miami teaches an English class at the Collegio MacDonell, a private school started by Methodists. Brevard students perform a minimum of 30 hours of service as a part of their graduation requirements from the two-year, UM-related college.

PHOTOS BY JOCK LAUTERER AND WILLIAM GREER III

Half of UM-membership will soon be older adults

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—The United Methodist population is aging at a faster rate than the U.S. general population, recent research indicates.

According to "The Church's Ministry and the Coming of the Aged," an article by the Rev. Chester E. Custer, 21.3 percent of United Methodists are older than 65, as compared to 11.8 percent of U.S. citizens overall.

The article appears in the September 1991 issue of "Circuit Rider," a professional journal for clergy published by The United Methodist Publishing House.

United Methodist researcher Warren J. Hartman also points out that, based on total "membership of the church, about four out of 10 (41 percent) of the active members are 55 or more."

And, by the year 2000, writes Mr. Custer, a consultant to the denomination's General Conference Advisory/Coordinating Committee on Older Adult Ministries, it is estimated that half the denomination's members will be 60 or older.

Mr. Custer suggests that the trend will influence the roles of both clergy and laity: "How might the pastor's role as preacher, counselor and administrator be influenced by this trend? To what kinds of ministries should the laity be committed?"

Whatever the answers, he writes, attitude is all-important. Viewing the older adult as a person of strength and opportunity, rather than one who is no longer productive, is the first step toward utilizing his or her talents and wisdom, he says.

To minister effectively to the older adult, a congregation must first identify those for whom it is responsible—members and nonmembers alike—and their needs and potential contributions, said Mr. Custer.

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Liberian United Methodists give spiritual healing to country wounded by civil war

By LYNNE De MICHELE

Last in a series.

MONROVIA, Liberia—After the longest, bloodiest period in Liberia's history, the church struggles daily to rebuild itself after civil war.

"The churches are alive again even where there is no longer a church building," said United Methodist Bishop Arthur F. Kulah of Liberia.

"We are reopening our schools, planting food, helping (refugees) to come home and to find what is left of their families."

UMC a key player

The United Methodist Church is the largest in this West African nation, with 65,000 members in 500 churches.

It has been a key player in the slow, difficult process of healing ever since the war left 50,000 dead and nearly half the population uprooted.

The assassination of President Samuel Doe in July 1990 fired old tribal hatreds and a chain of violence that subsided with an uneasy peace, in effect since November.

The peace process between rebels and an interim government unfolds at a glacial pace, but the church has regrouped quickly to meet many of the needs of its war-weary people.

Last spring Liberian United Methodists established feeding centers around Monrovia, distributing food and clothing supplied by LICOR (Liberian Committee on Relief)—a group of Liberians in the United States.

Each center distributes daily food to about 500 people on a continuous rotation.

The church has also started agricultural projects to grow vegetables with seeds and cuttings provided by Church World Service, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches.

Spiritual food as well

To give spiritual nourishment, Bible studies are conducted at project sites as well. And work is under way to finish reopening the church's schools and to start workshops and classes to meet special needs of post-war life.

As the country remains divided, Liberian United Methodists found it necessary to divide its annual conference into two sessions—one with delegates from Monrovia churches, then by virtue of a special pass from rebel leader Charles Taylor; another with delegates from upcountry territories under rebel control.

Bishop Kulah's conference sermon, entitled "We Are a Bridge," reflected the unique circumstances of the two-pronged meeting. Based on the work of this unique conference, churches have stepped up relief efforts, reaching nearly all areas of the country.

Healing is needed

Beyond the physical restoration of the war-battered country, an even more important part of the church's work now is spiritual healing, Bishop Kulah said.

"The people, especially the children, have suffered," he said. "Many have seen family members murdered before them. . . Now we must help them to forgive."

Many church leaders, including Bishop Kulah, were targeted by Doe for persecution or killing for their opposition to his government.

Now that the civil crisis has ended, "some pastors need help in forgiveness before they can begin to minister to their people again," Bishop Kulah said. "With help, we can take care of ourselves, but the healing will take a very long time."

Lynne De Michele, director of communications for the Indiana Area of the United Methodist Church, recently spent eight days in Liberia. This story was distributed by United Methodist News Service.

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Soviet funeral put religion in spotlight

TV images of priest and rabbi at martyrs' service hold promise and caution

By A. JAMES RUDIN
Religious News Service

Commentary

There have been many unforgettable TV pictures coming from Moscow recently, but one image dramatically captured the sense of profound change that is now sweeping the Soviet Union. It was the public funeral of the three young people who were killed while resisting the abortive coup.

At the nationally televised service was the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church.

But since one of the three victims was Jewish, a Moscow rabbi, wearing the traditional skull cap and prayer shawl, was also present.

Extraordinary moment

It was an extraordinary moment when the rabbi recited the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer in memory of the dead. Such a scene would have been impossible even a short time ago and is doubly poignant in light of the fact that the young martyr had just received his immigrant visa to Israel.

For nearly 75 years the Soviet Union has officially been an atheistic state. For many of those years, the Communist rulers carried out an aggressive campaign that prohibited parents from giving spiritual instruction to their children, closed seminaries, persecuted believers and suppressed the publication and distribution of prayer books, Bibles and other articles of religious expression.

Soviet Jews, Ukrainian Roman Catholics and Pentecostal Christians were special targets of the Communist authorities.

Incredibly, the language of the Bible, Hebrew, was even declared to be "counter revolutionary," and it became a criminal act to teach it. It was said that all religions were prisoners within the U.S.S.R., and Judaism was in solitary confinement.

Interreligious effort

For over 20 years, the struggle to bring freedom to Soviet Jewry has been one of the world's major human rights efforts. In this country Jews and Christians worked together in a remarkable interreligious effort that helped keep the Soviet Jewry movement alive, even in its darkest days.

Finally, amid "glasnost," the old Soviet anti-religion policy was weakened, and then finally abandoned. Religious faith, the first target of every totalitarian regime, has emerged with renewed vigor and credibility. Although the recent public funeral in Moscow was a sad occasion, it was also a symbolic confirmation of the failure of the atheistic Soviet state.

But with this sense of confirmation must also come a sense of caution.

During Tsarist rule in Russia, religious faith, especially that of the Russian Orthodox Church, was often a source of extreme nationalism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

The intense entanglement of the church and the regime usually resulted in political corruption and moral decadence.

Linkage personified

In the popular mind, this linkage is personified by Gregor Rasputin, an Orthodox priest who wielded enormous political power during the last days of the Romanov dynasty. Indeed, the very name, Rasputin, has come to mean the evil influence of religion in the affairs of state.

Today we rejoice that religion in the Soviet Union has been freed from the dungeon and has entered into the light of freedom. However, we must remain vigilant. With credibility comes responsibility.

Just as we pressed our campaign to bring freedom to Christians and Jews who suffered under Communist rule, we must now press with equal commitment our campaign to guarantee that religion within the U.S.S.R. does not now become an instrument for new prejudice and repression.

Many positive things have happened in the world of religion since 1917 when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Tsar's government.

MOSCOW—A Red Army officer, overcome with emotion during the funeral procession, kneels before a priest to kiss the spot where one of the Soviet martyrs died during the recent coup attempt.

Hopefully, the hard-won principles of religious liberty, individual conscience, minority rights and religious pluralism will also become an integral part of the Soviet republics.

The symbolism and the reality of the rabbi and the patriarch drawn together by tragedy was both startling and encouraging.

Was it the start of a new chapter or merely an isolated episode? Will the religious communities inside the Soviet Union now begin to build bridges of mutual respect and understanding, or will we see a replay of the painful past?

The answers to these questions are not yet clear, but the TV images of recent days were promising.

Rabbi Rudin is the American Jewish Committee's interreligious affairs director and a founder of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry.

Programs to note spirit quest in contemporary life

From news reports

NEW YORK—The renewed significance of spirituality as a moving force in the lives of peoples and nations is the focus of the 1991-92 "Vision & Values" series to be broadcast on ABC-TV.

Presented by the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission (IBC), the ecumenical series of four programs will cover such topics as churches at work in the turbulent inner cities of America; the evolving role of Catholicism in a newly democratic Central Europe; the enduring meaning of the Sabbath in Jewish life; and, finally, the contemporary phenomenon of spiritual renewal in the United States.

The successful "Vision & Values" series, which was broadcast last season on more than 150 local ABC affiliates, will air at 12:30 p.m. (ET) on four Sundays from September 1991 through January 1992 (Local air times may vary.)

The series begins Sept. 22 with "The Streets," produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. Hosted by actor Paul Winfield, the hour-long program reveals the struggle of religious groups to rescue inner city life from poverty and despair.

IBC is comprised of the communication departments of the National Council of Churches, the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, the United States Catholic Conference, and The Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Researcher tracks why people choose churches

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

George Barna first became interested in religious research when he began investigating different churches in the late 1970s.

Now, as head of a large national research and polling organization, he spends a lot of time tracking the reasons people move from one church to another.

Market research is one of the specialties of Mr. Barna's organization in Glendale, Calif.

Reports describe trends

Its reports and books describe general trends in attracting "baby boomers" and other groups to churches and give case studies of approaches that have worked, as well as profiles of the unchurched and factors that keep them out of churches.

When Mr. Barna first went exploring churches, he was a student at Rutgers University in New Jersey and was about to be married. He and his fiancee, both Catholics at the time, visited different types of churches and found an evangelical congregation that focused on the Bible—and that was the church they joined.

Moved to California

He later moved to California and went to work for a large marketing research firm.

A Christian media agency that worked with televangelists approached the firm with a request, and "since I was the only Christian in the company, I got the project," Mr. Barna related. "That was kind of what launched me into doing this work."

He opened his own firm in 1984 and now works with more than 100 groups.

In working with local congregations, "everything is done on a project basis," Mr. Barna, 36, told Religious News Service in a telephone interview. "What we're finding is that pretty much every church has its own particular or specific set of needs. Everything is customized to their needs."

The Barna Research Group offers three kinds of services to local churches: secondary data bases about their geographical areas based on existing research; a community study based on telephone interviews; and a study of the congregation, examining who the people are who attend and why they come.

Researcher George Barna says the goal of his firm's marketing surveys is to 'get a strategic perspective on how to do more effective ministry.'

Ministry is goal

"The goal of all of this is to get a strategic perspective on how to do more effective ministry," Mr. Barna said. "We have no interest in just doing interesting facts."

Some observers have raised questions about whether a marketing approach to church growth can compromise the message in order to achieve growth.

A guest editorial in the June 24 issue of "Christianity Today" cautions that "a marketing-driven church will be sorely tempted to compromise its message, both in content and in tone."

Mr. Barna agrees. "If the focus is solely on numbers, that I think is where you see churches starting to compromise," he said. But at the same time, he said, it is possible to achieve church growth without sacrificing integrity.

Mr. Barna is also putting his marketing research to practical use personally, helping to plant a new church in Glendale.

"It'll be non-denominational Christian," he said.

Review

TV drama 'Final Verdict' shows struggle to be faithful

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Many recent made-for-television films have been banal, sordid or sensational, but Turner Network Television has been offering some excellent productions lately.

A good example of this is "Final Verdict," which airs Sept. 9-21 on the TNT cable service, and it includes a sensitive depiction of people living out their faith in their families and their work.

Based on a novel

"Final Verdict" is based on a semi-autobiographical novel by Adela (Nora) Rogers St. Johns, one of the most celebrated newspaperwomen of this century. It focuses on Nora's relationship with her father, Earl Rogers, the greatest criminal lawyer of his day.

Rogers was the attorney who virtually created the art of cross-examination and who introduced such innovations as re-creation of the crime in the courtroom and the use of ballistics as evidence.

"Final Verdict" celebrates the Christian values which this attorney learned from his father, the Rev. Lowell Rogers, including the commitment to justice and truth and compassion for the underdog.

The movie focuses on two of Earl Rogers' famous trials in which both defendants grew up without the sort of caring, involved fathers that Lowell Rogers and Earl Rogers were.

Pushed 'over the line'

In one trial, Earl Rogers uses his considerable talents to free a probably innocent man. In the other case, the prospect of winning an exciting case pushes Earl Rogers "over the line" into an improper defense.

Earl Rogers wins this trial, too, but he is rightly condemned by his own father for betraying his values in pursuit of success.

Earl Rogers eventually abandons his family and his clients, and Nora goes looking for him. When she catches up with her father, he is despondent and drunk. She preaches to him without apology, and her faith and youthful wisdom help him rise above self-pity.

Executive producer Nelle Nugent, the winner of five Tony awards for her work on Broadway, has brought together a terrific team for "Final Verdict."

This reviewer seldom notices things such as production design, but Cary White has managed to make Houston and Galveston locations stand in quite well for 1919 Los Angeles.

Lawrence Roman's script adapts St. Johns' novel with warmth and dramatic flair. Director Jack Fisk pulls fine performances out of Treat Williams as Earl Rogers, veteran actor Glenn Ford as his father and 14-year-old Olivia Burnette as his daughter, Nora.

Anyone who doubts whether the church needs to welcome groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous may be chastened to see how grim the chances of recovery were for someone such as Earl Rogers before "Bill W." and "Dr. Bob" and a few others (many of them Methodists) started AA.

And anyone who doubts whether television is capable of giving religious folk a fair shake should see how well faithful people are portrayed in " Final Verdict."

Return sought of swindler's gifts to religious charities

Religious News Service

Several evangelical organizations that received hundreds of thousands of dollars from commodities trader Michael S. Douglas are being sued by a court-appointed receiver to recover the money following Mr. Douglas' conviction for swindling about $30 million from investors in a stock fraud.

Steven Scholes, the receiver and a partner in the Chicago law firm of McDermott, Wilt & Emery, is not arguing that the recipients knew about Mr. Douglas' frauds when they accepted his donations.

But he says that "by receiving and retaining improperly obtained and diverted assets" the non-profit organizations "unjustly retained a benefit to the detriment" of the investors.

However, the fact that the recipient groups were not aware of Mr. Douglas' frauds at the time raises the question of whether they are now innocent victims, particularly in cases where the money has already been spent.

Many of the recipients of donations from Mr. Douglas are small organizations that say they would be forced to shut down if they had to repay the gifts, such as Camp Elim and Other Youth Ministries of Haiti, located in Elk Grove, Ill., which received $12,000 from the investor.

History of Hymns

Vivid images proclaim God's glory

O worship the King, all glorious above,
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Poetic language, vivid imagery, and elegant style make this most unusual hymn. Here are majesty, beauty, wonder, and glory. Here are reverence, assurance, and joyful praise.

Based on Psalm 104, the hymn was written by Robert Grant in 1833; reading the psalm brings the hymn into clearer focus. The hymn reveals the spirit of the psalmist as he is caught up in the wonder and beauty of God's magnificent creation.

Seven names for Jehovah are found in the hymn—King, Shield, Defender, Ancient of Days, Maker, Redeemer, and Friend.

The second stanza shouts in descriptive imagery of God's might and grace. We are reminded that God's robe is light, his canopy is all of space, his chariots of wrath form thunderclouds, and his path is on the wings of the storm.

Of Scottish ancestry, Grant was born in Bengal, India, where his father was a director in the East India Company. While still a child he returned with his family to Scotland, was educated at Cambridge, and then was admitted to the bar.

His election to Parliament began his career of distinction. Sent to India as governor of Bombay in 1834, Grant was knighted by King William IV before he left England.

Grant was the author of more than a dozen hymns, most of which have been forgotten. His name, however, will long remain in our hymnals because of the high expression of God's praise that begins "O worship the King, all glorious above."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"When the Church of Jesus"

Dear Deborah

I can't go to church with my best buddy

Dear Deborah:

My best friend, Dan, and I have been buddies since second grade. We stay overnight and then go to church with each other a lot. But now my church has a lady minister and Dan's parents said he can't go with me any more, because their pastor says it is sinful to have a lady minister.

I think it is not fair. What can I do?

—Jim

Dear Jim:

You are learning a difficult lesson about what it means to live in a country where people are free to choose their own religion and their own church—or even not to choose any at all.

I hope you and Dan can still be friends, even though you cannot go to church together. When each of you is an adult, you then can be free to make your own choices.

I also hope you will remember how much it hurts when one group condemns another and do your part to reduce this kind of discrimination.

In the meantime, you can pray for more peace and understanding among Christians and among the people in our nation.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Catholics begin Columbus observances

Religious News Service

The U.S. Catholic observance of the 500th anniversary of the voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Americas will be launched Sept. 14 with evangelization services in about 140 of the 188 cathedrals.

The cross will be the main symbol of the services on that date, designated as the Feast of the Holy Cross in the church calendar. The services will feature replicas of a cross which Pope John Paul II presented in 1984 to the bishops of the Americas during a meeting in the Dominican Republic.

The Columbus anniversary has been criticized by both religious and secular groups who charge that the explorer's voyages inaugurated an era of racism and repression, particularly directed against Native Americans and their cultures. While the U.S. Catholic bishops are using the occasion to commemorate the "fifth centenary of evangelization of the Americas," their November 1990 pastoral letter on the subject acknowledged that "Christopher Columbus himself was a complex man in whom religious piety and evangelizing zeal combined with many other motives."

A suggested liturgy for the Sept. 14 services which has been printed by the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic family fraternal service organization, includes a passage in which the worship leader says, "Those who brought the cross sometimes acted in contradictory and unjust ways. We recognize the sufferings endured by the inhabitants of this continent as well as of those who were forced to these shores. We recognize that countless lives were lost unnecessarily and that many have been victims of oppression and indignities."

United Methodist Youth of Louisiana

1991-1992 CCYM Members

ACADIANA DISTRICT:
Rev. Thomas Dolph
Laura Meade
Mary Elliott
Lucas Doucet
Heather Herman
Jenny Dinger

ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT:
Nelda Tarver
Jola Bortner
Steve Kendrick
Scott Tarver
Ami Hurst
Karen Westbrook
Lori Bridges

BATON ROUGE DISTRICT:
Faye Ross
Judy Betz
Julie Betz
Brandon Taylor
Connie Stafford
Cynthia Cottrill
LaShawn Haynes

LAKE CHARLES DISTRICT:
Rev. David DeWitt
Mary Boston
Marcus Padgett
Shannon Rachal
John Shermer
Amy Valdez

MONROE DISTRICT:
Joyce Meadors
Rev. Stuart Sherman
Gretchen Kelly
Crystal Meadors
Marc Braden
Mike Randall
Eric Robinson

NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT:
Mary Margaret Owen
Dolores Giles
Clarice Hincks
Tiffany Giles
Brett Cothren
Adarryl Hunter
Karen Shell

NORTH SHORE DISTRICT:
Pleasant Sibley
Heather Rich
Brandy Hughes
Jeremy Smith
Cynthia Dear
April Thibodeaux

RUSTON DISTRICT:
Rev. Bill Willis
Peg Parker
Stephanie Anders
Jamie Grubbs
Michael Thomas
Lin Crowson
Kishia Green

SHREVEPORT DISTRICT:
Betty Smith
Vanessa Graham
Heather McLelland
Bethany Milliron
Jessica Stringfield
Antworne Jones
Victor Milton

Adult Workers With Youth

Rev Tom Salsgiver and Esther Socolofsky led the August 24 seminar for Adult Workers With Youth. Encyclopedia of Youth Work was presented by Tom who is the Director of Education and Ministries for Senior High Youth of the General Board of Discipleship. Music, Music, Music was the topic for Esther who is the Choral Director of University United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

Approximately 60 persons attended the Adult Youth Workers Seminar held at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria.

Summer Events

The Louisiana representatives, Kishia Green and Lori Bridges, helped the Louisiana CCYM share "Down On The Bayou" with the South Central Jurisdiction during the July JYMO meeting held at Mt. Sequoyah, Arkansas. Lori was elected President of the South Central Jurisdiction Youth Ministry Organization.

NYMO

The Louisiana representatives: Scott Tarver, Carolyn Dove and Lucas Doucet participated in the National Youth Ministry Organization meeting August 2-5 in Columbia, Missouri.

Youth '91

The Louisiana Delegation to Youth '91 received their exercise as they shared in the Fellowship, Worship, Concerts, Learning Options and Move-A-Thon during the August 5-9 Youth '91 held in Columbia, Missouri.

Louisiana was well represented at Youth '91. Persons came from New Orleans, Eunice, Slidell, Baton Rouge, Monroe, Epps, Alexandria, Jena, Natchitoches, Downsville, and Bastrop.

The 1991-92 CCYM officers are (back row) Rev. Bill Willis and Rev. Tom Dolph, (second row) Marc Barden, Lucas Doucet and Pleasant Sibley, (front row) Eric Robinson, Lori Bridges and John Shermer. Lori will be guiding the conference as President.

Youth Service Fund Recognition

If you would like to honor someone in a special way why not consider giving a gift for the mission of the church in the form of "A Youth Service Fund Recognition." Send your contribution of $20 or more to Carolyn Dove, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Please make your check payable to the Louisiana Annual Conference. A certificate of recognition will be sent to the honoree. Example below:

A Youth Service Fund Recognition
has been awarded to

by Conference Council on Youth Ministries

A gift for the mission of the church has been forwarded to

The Louisiana Annual Conference
Youth Ministries, The United Methodist Church

Youth Service Fund Committee _____ Date _____

Youth Service Fund Committee _____ Youth Service Fund Committee _____

Coming Events

Fall Convocation	September 28, 1991
Junior High Retreat (7th & 8th Graders)	November 8-10, 1991
United Nations Seminar (11th & 12th Graders)	November 22-30, 1991
Forum '92 (Adult Youth Workers)	January 15-19, 1992
Senior High Retreat (9th-12th Graders)	January 17-19, 1992
Confirmation Retreat (7th-12th Graders)	March 13-15, 1992
Adult Workers Seminar	April 4, 1992
YOUTH SERVICE FUND SUNDAY	April 26, 1992
Annual Conference (Youth Delegates)	June 1-4, 1992
DCYM Training (District Youth Teams)	June 4-6, 1992
JYMO (CCYM Youth Team)	July 6-11, 1992

FALL CONVO

September 28, from 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. FALL CONVO will provide music by SPIRITSONG, Christian drama by the COVENANT PLAYERS and the opportunity for you to participate in the largest Youth Service Fund Pillow Fight to be recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records. Included in the $8.50 fee is lunch, a souvenir pillowcase and program cost. Bring your foam pillow to Louisiana College on September 28 for a day of fellowship, worship and sharing. The registration and medical release form is mandatory.

REGISTRATION AND MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

This registration form is to give an accurate count of all who will be attending the FALL CONVOCATION, and to let us know for how many to plan lunch. Your $8.50 fee covers the cost of lunch, pillowcase and all program costs. Your fee should be sent with the registration and medical release form (BY SEPTEMBER 23) to Carolyn Dove, Conference Youth Coordinator, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER( ) _____

ADDRESS _____

CHURCH _____ PARENTS NAME _____

I hereby give my permission and approval as parent(s) and or guardian for my child, _____ to participate in the YSF Pillow Fight to be held on September 28, 1991 during the Louisiana Annual Conference Youth Convocation. I hereby release the Louisiana Annual Conference United Methodist Church and Louisiana College, its staff and sponsors, from responsibility and liability for an injury or illness that my child may sustain during this activity. In the event of an emergency, I hereby authorize an adult leader from the church, on this activity, an agent for me to seek medical treatment by a licensed physician. I expect to be contacted as soon as possible in the case of such injury that requires medical attention.

PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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The Church: A Community that Encourages One Another?

This week's column is written by the Reverend Leslie N. Akin, Director, Educational and Worship Ministries for the Louisiana Annual Conference.

Recently I heard a story.

A young man slept peacefully in bed on a Sunday morning. Suddenly he felt his wife's hands tugging on his arm. "Come on honey," she commanded, "you've got to get up. It's time for church." "I don't want to go to church," he responded. "I don't like it there." "But, you've got to go," his wife retorted. "No!," he insisted, "those people don't like me. I always feel like I'm doing something wrong." "You've got to go!" "Why?!", he demanded, "you just name one good reason why I should have to go." "Because," she stated, "you're the pastor."

Although we chuckle, many of us know too well the painful reality of a critical spirit. With our words we often tear down one another and divide the body of Christ. A minister mocks another evangelist's style of preaching. A church member complains that the minister doesn't visit enough — another bemoans the fact that he or she visits too often.

Yet every week we read together from the same Scriptures which contain the words, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up . . . build up one another in love. Make every effort to **keep the unity of the Spirit through love.**" Eph. 4:29,2

Have you looked recently and seen the hurting people around you? **People wounded by the words of others surround us.** Pastors of small churches, medium-sized churches and large churches. Church members. Bishops. District Superintendents. Christian Educators. Choir Directors. Committee members. Church staff. Yourself. All stand wounded.

Do you ever wonder why we are so critical of one another? Are our own egos so fragile that we must tear down others in order to feel better about ourselves? Are we so desperate for everyone to do it our way — the "right" way — that we need to criticize others for doing it differently?

"Keep the unity of the Spirit through love," the Scriptures say. What does it mean? It means **celebrate unity in the midst of diversity.** A pastoral counsellor may suggest it means to **differentiate** — to maintain one's capacity to be different while remaining connected and to offer others the space to do the same. It means building up and **encouraging one another** day after day after day.

We are the Church. We are a Church seeking revitalization. In their Foundation Document **Vital Congregations: Faithful Disciples** our bishops urge us to realize the gospel in our own congregations. They remind us that "every congregation is a vivid example of the task of creating Christian community . . . each congregation must be built up in love by the Spirit to make best use of the gifts of the Spirit there." But we can't do it by ourselves.
Gracious God,

Teach us to be your church TODAY.
TODAY give us eyes that see the strengths of others.
TODAY give us a spirit that celebrates our diversity.
TODAY give us a voice that boldly encourages.
TODAY empower us to be the body of Christ united in the Spirit of love.
All praise and all glory to you, Our healer, our deliverer!
Amen.

Leslie Akin

Conference Center Board Learns from Others

Nineteen Louisiana United Methodists returned from a fact-finding, three-state tour of conference center sites full of enthusiasm and ideas for Louisiana's planned Conference Center. "It was as helpful learning what not to do as it was learning what to do," according to Mrs. Seola Callahan, one of the participants in the August 21-23 trip.

Sites visited were Camp Wesley Pines in Hazelhurst, Mississippi; Camp Sumatanga in Gallant, Alabama; and the Simpsonwood Conference Center in Norcross, Georgia. The sites were selected because they differ from each other in size of facilities, types of construction and acreage. The trip "gave ideas of what can be done and what has been done in other places,"said Project Coordinator Dr. Harvey Williamson.

Accompanying the group, which included Bishop William B. Oden, CCOM Executive Director Dr. Donald C. Cottrill and Conference Center Board of Trustees president Dr. Tom Matheny, were Mr. Thilo Steinschulte and Mr. Joe Brocato. Mr. Steinschulte and Mr. Brocato are with the Alexandria architecture firm, Barron, Heinberg and Brocato, which is drawing up a master-plan to be submitted for consideration at the 1992 Annual Conference.

Six conference center committees under the Conference Center Board of Trustees are also meeting this month to develop specific responsibilities for the project. Plans, according to Dr. Williamson, are moving along rapidly and well.

Conference Center site visitation participants.

Contract signed

Dr. Tom Matheny (center), president of the Louisiana Conference Center Board of Trustees, signs a contract for architectural work for the proposed Center with the Alexandria-based firm of Barron, Heinberg and Brocato. Looking on (clockwise) are Mrs. Vera Packer, secretary of the Board; Mr. Thilo Steinschulte, architect with the firm; the Rev. Don Avery, vice-president of the Board; Mr. Joe Brocato, architect with the firm; and Dr. William B. Oden, presiding Bishop of the Louisiana Area.

'When did we see you hungry or thirsty . . .?'

Funds Needed to Help Victims

Bishop C. P. Minnick Jr., president of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, has sent an urgent appeal to all United Methodists requesting additional financial assistance for our churches' response to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the Philippines, Liberia and China. The United Methodist Church continues its aid to the people of the Philippines as they recover from the devastation caused by both the earthquake and the Mt. Pinatubo volcanic eruption. Liberia is experiencing hunger, disease and refugee resettlement resulting from political upheaval and war. China is seeking help due to the immense suffering and loss as a result of flooding.

The Church has responded, as always, to the needs of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. More help is much greatly needed.

Offerings for these UMCOR efforts should be sent to the Conference Office of Financial Affairs and marked as an Advance using the following numbers:

Philippines	240225-1
Liberia	150300-7
China	982450-8

Communication Workshop Big Success Sequel Set

Fifty-six people from 26 annual conferences attended the "Communication Skills Building for the 90s" workshop that was held July 7-13 at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

According to Shirley Struchen, director of conference services and communication education at United Methodist Communications (UMCom), "Everyone asked us when we were going to have another one, so we have scheduled a sequel for August 18-22, 1992 — same place!"

Co-sponsored by UMCom and Scarritt-Bennett Center, the workshop helped participants learn basic "how-to" skills for use in their local church programs. Areas covered during the week-long event were: "Video Use in Local Church," "Internal Communications," "Radio," and "Local Church Media Campaign."

Spanish-language workshops were also conducted July 11-13 in the areas of "Internal Communications" and "Radio."

Participants not only learned during class sessions, but also during fellowship times from other participants. In addition, the multi-cultural worship services were said by all to be a highlight.

Mrs. Judi Sarver of Asbury United Methodist Church in Lafayette and the Reverend Timothy Smith from Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church in New Orleans attended the communications workshop from our conference.

For more information on the 1992 workshop write Josephine Huang-Yeh, Scarritt-Bennett Center, 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2166 or Shirley Whipple Struchen, United Methodist Communications, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202-0320.

In Memoriam

The Reverend C. Reginald Hardy, former member of the Louisiana Annual Conference, died September 1, 1991. Funeral services were held at Cober United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas. Mr. Hardy is the father-in-law of the Reverend Bob Potter, pastor of Munholland United Methodist Church in Metairie.

* * *

Mrs. Virginia Davis Laskey, age 91, known throughout the United Methodist Church for her wide ranging philanthropic work, died in Ruston, September 7, 1991, after a short illness. The funeral service was held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Ruston, on September 9.

Described by Conference United Methodist Women's president, Mrs. Norma Winegeart, as a "woman ahead of her times in her vision for the Church," Mrs. Laskey rose to national prominence for her work in the Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS), forerunner of the United Methodist Women. She was Conference President of the WSCS from 1946-1954; secretary of the WSCS for the South Central Jurisdiction from 1952-56; and a member of the General Church's Women's Division of the WSCS from 1956-68. In 1964, she became the fourth national president of that organization, serving until 1968. After her tenure, a woman's scholarship fund was set up in her name.

Mrs. Laskey was an active laywoman until her death. She continued her long years of service to the Methodist Children's Home in Ruston and as a member of the board of Centenary College. She also served through the years on many other boards and agencies in the Church and in the Ruston community. Mrs. Winegeart said, "she was a very special lady who will be greatly missed."

Interesting Events Slated at Acadiana Church

On Saturday, October 5, Asbury UMC in Lafayette will host its 9th singles conference, "**Celebrating Christian Singleness.**" Dr. Susan Annette Muto and the Rev. Jim Newton will be leading the event. Registration is $20.00 through Wednesday, September 25, and $25.00 thereafter. Brochures may be requested from Asbury UMC, 101 Live Oak Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70503, (318) 984-4211.

Dr. Muto is a single, Catholic layperson. She served as director of Duquesne University's Institute of Formative Spirituality from 1981 to 1988. Her many books include **Celebrating the Single Life: A Spirituality for Single Persons in Today's World.**

Rev. Newton is a United Methodist minister and a single parent. He is a songwriter, singer, and speaker. He has won awards for his "therapeutic music" for children and often works with single adults and adult children of alcoholics.

Dr. Terry Teykl of Aldersgate UMC, College Station, Texas, will lead a conference on promoting prayer in the local church at Asbury on October 18 & 19. This nationally known speaker pastors a rapidly growing church undergirded with prayer and will share with conference participants ways of renewing the church through prayer. Dr. Teykl will speak on Friday night (7:00-9:15 p.m.) and again on Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) The conference will cost $10 (for snacks, lunch Saturday, and a booklet, "Acts 29").

Interested persons should contact the Reverend Charlie Langford at Asbury UMC.

On the inside . . .

Just as Christ did, workplace chaplains are bringing the Gospel to where the people are. See stories and photos on Page 4.

Of Special Interest on the Inside Pages

United Methodist colleges among 100 "best buys"..... Page 3
Churches gather aid for Pinatubo volcano victims..... Page 3
Caucus petitions lack understanding, grace..... Page 2

Around the Conference

Pictured are those who recently attended Bush UMC's Vacation Bible School. The school was held under the direction of Mrs. Dottie Salathe and Mrs. Helen Wood.

"Joy Week," a "souped-up" version of Vacation Bible School, was recently held at First UMC in LaPlace. An average of 40 children with 10 workers enjoyed a week of fun, crafts, music and Bible emphasis. Their motto for the week was, "Share the Joy," and indeed they did. The children brought donations of school supplies daily to "share" with the Methodist Home of New Orleans. Dr. Charles Strong is pastor of First Church.

Editorial

A holy habit worth reviving

Church meetings sometimes yield nuggets of faith that are more meaningful than the group's formal actions.

A case in point occurred during morning devotions at a recent churchwide study committee.

A panel member recalled how her mother sent her off to college witb a Bible containing a list of verses to consult when experiencing fear, anger, loneliness or inadequacy.

The devotional leader then invited those in the room to offer, from memory, Bible verses that had given tbem comfort or counsel. Tbe resulting offerings painted a rich landscape of how God speaks threugh Scripture to people at crucial times in their lives.

We believe this exercise is instructive of a holy habit that is too seldom practiced and worthy of being revived.

Specifically, by **committing to memory biblical texts that are particularly meaningful to us and sbaring tbem with others, we enrich our individual and corporate identity as people of faith.**

That practice was common among previous generations of Christians. Two factors help explain but do not excuse its demise: a disdain for mechanical "rote" learning and the danger of being superficial, that is, reducing the overall biblical witness to a few verses taken out-of-context.

Hence, a caution: Dealing responsibly with the biblical witness requires that one read and understand, to the best of one's ability, the meaning of a given verse in relationship both to the author's purpose and to the enduring themes of the Bible.

With that caution in mind, however, here are some benefits that can result from the discipline of learning particular Bible texts "by heart."

Identity. One of the best ways to learn what it means to be a Christian comes from encountering and internalizing our ancestors' experience of God's revelation. Relating their experience to our own helps stimulate patterns of thinking and living that are both modern and distinctively Christian.

Roots. The Bible's stories of God's people are our spiritual "inheritance" and primary source of a redemptive perspective on life. These stories, repeated often, help root us in the faith and reassure us that we're not the first, and likely won't be the last, to experience both life's joys and its hardships.

Hope. Scripture reminds us of God's power to transform human life and of our ability to become new creatures in Christ. That reinforces our hope that, whatever our condition, we are not alone; God is with us!

To encourage the habit of "writing Scripture on our hearts," and applying its meaning to everyday life, we recommend:

■ Read the Bible regularly. Write down verses that you find particularly meaningful, including the familiar "standbys" of our spiritual forebears such as Psalm 23 and John 3:16.

■ Set a goal. For example, memorizing one verse per week ensures building up an abundant storehouse of biblical riches.

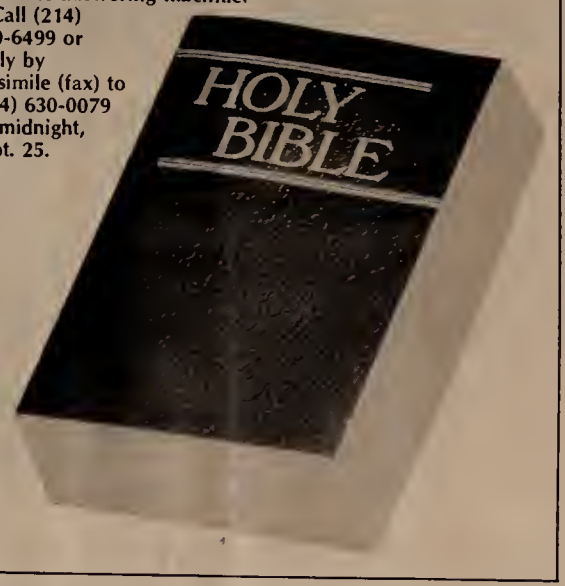
■ Share treasured verses among family and friends. Discuss verses that hold significance for each others' lives in light of what's happening to you and the world around us.

FaithLine

This week's editorial calls for reviving the discipline of memorizing Bible verses that hold special meaning for Christians.

Cite a Bible verse that holds particular meaning for you and why it does so. Tell us your response by leaving a 45-second (maximum) message on the Reporter's 24-hour FaithLine answering machine.

Call (214) 630-6499 or reply by facsimile (fax) to (214) 630-0079 by midnight, Sept. 25.



My Witness

God gives us the hours, but we 'make our days'

By LONZO BATTLES

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Lonzo Battles lives in Yukon, Okla., and is a retired ministerial member of the Oklahoma Annual Conference.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

For years I have kept a prayer diary. I record Scriptures read from "The Upper Room." Then I keep track of my reading through the New Testament over and over. I also write a prayer for each day.

One day I looked back at what I had written. It said: "This is the day which Lonzo hatb made." My first thought was that this was a slip of arrogance. After all, the Psalmist wrote: "This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalms 118:24).

As I pondered, the more I realized that I do indeed make my days. God offers the 24 hours, but it is up to me to fill in all the blanks. I make my day.

On TV shows, people do all sorts of remarkable things. Often my wife asks: "Now how can he/she do that?" My answer is always the same: "They have a good scriptwriter." I add that I could do amazing things too if I had a good scriptwriter.

We all make our own day. I have Parkinson's disease. There are lots of things much worse. So it's no big deal. However, it is a slow trip downhill to total disability. Yet I still have to write my own script. My Parkinson's can't be allowed to make my day.

I have been on this earth almost 70 years. As I reflect on this, I would like to be able to rewrite my story at many points. It would be good to correct mistakes, to change unwise decisions, to do the good that was once left undone.

Of course I have no control over what has been. The curtain is down on this first 70 years of my life. What has been shall always be. Yet, I am still my own scriptwriter for the days coming. I can hope and dream, wait and listen. I can carefully and prayerfully use the time that God still offers.

Then at the close of my life journey I can say:

"Lord this is the life which Lonzo has made; full of failures, but fuller still of your 'amazing grace.'"

I doubt that the Lord will say: "Well done." More likely: "Your script is accepted."

Letters to the Editor

Suicide editorial missed point about best seller

The Aug. 30 editorial on the best-selling book, "Final Exit," missed the main points of this suicide manual for the terminally ill.

The book openly discusses the problems of such illness, whicb most of us have at least vicariously experienced, and about which we are at least unconsciously anxious. It urges us not to even consider suicide except under very narrow circumstances.

Your editorial should have courageously faced the realities faced in the book. The best suicide prevention techniques bave always involved full and frank discussion. Instead, you offered "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt go to hospice," which may be best for some but not all when final illness comes.

You should know and report that the United Methodists of Washington State in a recent session voted almost 100 percent in support of Proposition 119. If approved in the November election, Proposition 119 will legalize physician-aid-in-dying for terminally ill patients who request it.

The brisk sales of "Final Exit" make a loud statement of protest of how medicine is dealing with terminal illness and dying. Your editorial policy should be to provide enough information so people can decide for themselves whether this book is part of the problem or part of the solution.

Phil McClure
Richardson, Texas

Loss explanation hit

I am writing regarding Gilbert Tavemer's Aug. 9 letter to the editor which was a response to an article regarding UMC membersbip loss.

Mr. Taverner describes the continual large losses annually as coming to reality because of the church's ethical stands on so-called courageous positions.

I disagree. Most losses are, and will continue to be, due to the likes of Council of Bishops' mandates and the expensive operations decisions on "lifestyle" by the General Conference.

We have apportionments that are related to heavy administrative costs for an elite few, appointments that don't fit, and continual unfairness towards the mainstream majority by leadership that always seems to point unfairly at all the majority's sins toward the minorities.

Baloney! What a way to kill a church.

William R. Morley
Strong, Maine

'Dedication' should be OK

Thank you for Diane Huie Balay's report on the work of the committee studying the United Methodist understanding of baptism (see UMR, August 30).

Allow me to respond to the issue of "infant dedication." I am not advocating that services of infant dedication be the norm in United Methodist practice.

But I do believe that in United Methodism where we place a high premium on our pluralism, openmindedness, and ecumenism, pastors of local churches should be allowed and equipped to conduct services of infant dedication.

I say that when parents, who love God in Christ and their little children, are prompted by the Holy Spirit to dedicate their children and themselves to God for the sake of the spiritual (and total) welfare of their children, the church ought not stand in the way of their doing so.

Clyde Galow
Aurora, Illinois

Clarification offered

I am writing as a member of the church's baptism study committee to lift up a concern about the Aug. 30 article headlined, "4 more years' baptism study recommended."

A sentence in the article gives the impression that "rebaptism" services have been developed even though the baptism study committee has always stated that baptism is not repeatable.

My concern is that readers who have strong feelings on either side of the issue will read the sentence to mean that "rebaptism" services have been developed, which is not the case.

It might have been more helpful if the term "reaffirmation [of baptism] services" had been used.

Thank you for your very conscientious reporting of the work of this committee.

Peggy Sewell
Salt Lake City, Utah

What others are saying

"Jesus told story after story about the importance of small acts of devotion, the precious quality of individuals, the calling to be Namers by his own example. ... You are a Namer from time to time. . . . Being sensitive to your role can make significant the simple, obscure acts of devotion, including those of which you are unaware to the lonely in your midst."

—Bettie Wilson Story, editor, Central Illinois edition of tbe Reporter.

* * *

"Too often we judge our local churches and our annual, or even the general, conferences according to the criteria of productivity and efficiency. Our purpose, rather, should focus on being relationship persons in the mission towards Jesus Christ. The two are not always the same."

—United Methodist Bishop Forrest C. Stith, Syracuse, N.Y., Area

* * *

"It was not the churches of East Germany who brought about the peace. It was the power of the word of Christ that people heard to be tbe liberating truth. The Gospel of Christ was not only words but visible in community. The churches were a place where different groups could find reconciliation. And the peace without violence was the sign of the new humanity in Christ bringing God's eternity."

—United Methodist Bishop Ruediger Minor, Leipzig, Germany.

* * *

"What good is life unless you give it away?—unless you can give it for a better world, even if you never see that world but have only carried your grain of sand to the building site?"

—Penny Lernoux, writer, journalist.

Here I Stand

Caucus petitions lack understanding, grace

By ROD SAUNDERS

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Rod Saunders is pastor of East Bloomfield United Methodist Church, East Bloomfield, N.Y. (Western New York Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Petitions for the 1992 General Conference that are being promoted by Good News, the unofficial evangelical caucus, seem ironic.

On the one hand, Good News is proposing that General Conference limit funds to United Metbodist seminaries and require that the seminaries be monitored for their faithfulness to church doctrine as contained in the Book of Discipline.

On the other hand, Good News' own "faithfulness" is questionable. It has established an alternative missionary-sending unit (the Mission Society for United Methodists) and a publishing unit (Bristol Books)—neither of which is part of The United Methodist Church nor provided for in the Book of Discipline.

We could already be split

Further, Good News maintains that most students who agree with its outlook do not attend United Methodist seminaries.

Indeed, an active bishop at last year's "Gathering" in Fort Worth stated that if Good News had a way to create its own pensions and financial units, we would likely already have a split denomination.

It's in that disturbing context that the proposals to limit seminary funding and to monitor "doctrinal faithfulness" are particularly troubling.

By stating that academic freedom and accreditation should not take priority over "faitbfulness to the Gospel," Good News implies that our seminaries actually are being "unfaithful to the Gospel."

Any such perspective betrays a gross lack of understanding of and grace toward our seminary faculties, administrators and trustees—some of tbe most gifted, dedicated, and intelligent servants of God who serve our denomination.

Furthermore, if General Conference adopts the Good News petitions, our denomination and our seminaries could suffer major economic setbacks and will certainly lose standing and credibility in academic and mainline Christian arenas.

Only in The UMC!

By contrast, I recall a worship service during annual conference this summer. We went from an African-American spiritual, "Soon and Very Soon," to a 16th century prayer of St. Ignatius. The worship leader, a former nun, remarked that only in The United Methodist church could such spiritual breadth and depth of experience be found.

We are, in fact, a broad-spectrum church, an identity that can be credited to our founder, John Wesley, who said, "As to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think." (Book of Discipline, p. 51).

The Good News movement is not the complete Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is not good news at all in the eyes of many people, particularly when it makes proposals and takes steps that would weaken and divide our church.

It is time that its members decided either to be honest and separate or to acknowledge The United Methodist Church as the pluralistic body that it is.

However, I believe The United Methodist Church is big enough to live with the Good News folks as well as with those who bold differing perspectives.

What's required of all of us is openness, flexibility and grace while we practice the tolerance of our founder in the name of the reconciling Christ of God.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise" (RSV).

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Ephesians 4:29)

Readings for week of Sept. 23

Monday: Psalms 27:1-6
Tuesday: Psalms 27:7-14
Wednesday: Job 28:1-19
Thursday: Job 28:20-28
Friday: Mark 9:30-37
Saturday: James 3:1-12
Sunday: James 3:13-18

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Welcome to new readers in Weatherford

We welcome as new UMR readers some 400 member-families of **First United Methodist Church** in **Weatherford, Texas** (Central Texas Annual Conference).

These are the latest to join more than 350 local congregations nationwide that publish their news as special UMR editions.

To our new readers in Weatherford, we say, "Welcome." We hope you'll find your UMR edition interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "FaithLine."

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of The United Methodist Reporter."

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Faith watch

WHO GETS THE NEWS?: United Methodists generally are satisfied with the amount of information they receive from their church, but lay leaders sometimes fail to share what they receive, and younger members are less satisfied and informed. For laity, the most important sources of information originate in their local churches, while clergy are more likely to identify annual conference or denominational sources. These are among the results of a study on the communications and information needs of United Methodists conducted recently by the General Council on Ministries in cooperation with several other church agencies.

OPPOSED TO THOMAS: The General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division executive committee voted last week to oppose the confirmation of U.S. Supreme Court nominee **Clarence Thomas**. Women's Division chief executive, **Joyce Sohl**, told the Reporter that the division voted in 1984 to "oppose any Supreme Court nominee whose actions have indicated that they do not share the same concerns [as the Women's Division] of civil rights and of the rights of women." A special mailing has been sent to the 72 annual conference presidents of United Methodist Women and conference secretaries of Christian social action to mobilize a letter-writing campaign to their U.S. senators.

Clarence Thomas

BIBLES TO SOLDIERS: While **Boris Yeltsin** was holed up in the Russian Parliament building during the attempted Kremlin coup, United Methodists from Estonia were carrying Russian-language New Testaments to Moscow, members of the church's Panel on International Affairs were told this month. According to the Rev. **Olav Parnaments** of Estonia, the United Methodists crawled over tanks, passing the Bibles to the soldiers and saying, "God does not want you to kill." United Methodist Bishop C. **Dale White** of New York related the story from his report on the European Commission on Mission meeting in Budapest, Hungary.

SECRET MESSAGES: The lay leader of the fledgling United Methodist congregation in Sverdlovsk, Russia, received secret messages from Russian President **Boris Yeltsin** during the recent U.S.S.R. coup attempt. One message to **Lydia Istomina** indicated that the leaders of the coup had stored more than 250,000 handcuffs in a Moscow warehouse to be used on the reformers. In a faxed message to the congregation's sponsoring church, Broadmoor UMC of Shreveport, La., Ms. Istomina said church members sustained one another during the coup's dark days. "Because we have the church and each other, we will not give in despair," Ms. Istomina said of some members' comments.

HOPE FOR HOSTAGE: Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continue to pray for the release of Middle East hostage **Thomas Sutherland**, a Presbyterian elder from Boulder, Colo. Dr. Sutherland was dean of American University in Beirut when he was seized June 9, 1985. Only hostage Terry **Anderson**, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, who was abducted March 16, 1985, has been imprisoned longer. Recently released British hostage **John McCarthy** said he had been strengthened by the "faith, kindness and sense of humor" Dr. Sutherland showed him during their joint captivity.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Enthusiasm backs UM work in U.S.S.R.

Medical efforts and publishing discussions mark start of church's Soviet Union ministries

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

With "much enthusiasm," United Methodists have greeted latest reports of the church's extended work in the Soviet Union.

So says the head of the church's Global Ministries board's World Division.

Further, adds the Rev. Robert J. Harman, "Each week, inquiries are received in the World Division through mail and phone contacts. A file of personnel resources and project suggestions is rapidly growing."

Dr. Harman offered those overall assessments and a ministry-by-min-istry report to the church's Joint Panel on International Affairs, meeting Sept. 6-7 in New York.

Expanded and coordinated United Methodist work in the U.S.S.R. dates primarily to an exploratory trip last January by the Global Ministries board's president, Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn (Nebraska Area), and the board's chief executive, the Rev. Randolph Nugent.

In the Soviet Union they met with among others, leaders of the Soviet Peace Fund, a private humanitarian organization in the Soviet Union. With that organization's encouragement, expanded United Methodist outreach began almost immediately.

A group of United Methodists will visit projects in Moscow and the United Methodist congregation in Sverdlovsk.

Eight months later, says Dr. Harman, this is the status of specific activities and projects:

■ **Medical treatment for Chernobyl children.** Seventeen children from the Soviet Union were sent to Richmond, Va., this month for leukemia treatment. They are staying with 11 families from the Richmond District of the Virginia Annual Conference (see UMR, Sept. 6.)

■ **Hospital partnership with Memphis Methodist Health Systems and the Moscow Pediatric Hospital No. 3.** The Methodist Health Systems of Memphis will provide training for selected personnel from the Moscow hospital, exchange medical personnel on a short-term basis, and increase the supply of drugs available to the Moscow hospital.

Memphis Methodist also will solicit equipment and training regarding its use and maintenance by the Moscow hospital and assist in that hospital's development of appropriate standards of patient care. The major health need to be addressed is pediatric hematology.

■ **Assignment of Missionary Support.** Christine Hena, a commissioned missionary of the church's General Board of Global Ministries, is supervising the United Methodist medical project at Moscow Pediatric Hospital No. 3 and is assisting with other projects of Global Ministries' Joint UMC/U.S.S.R. Commission on Humanitarian Assistance.

■ **United Methodist General Agency Relationship.** An invitation has been extended to the Rev. Ioan Ekonomtsev, director of external relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, to visit United Methodist general agencies in October to discuss a possible United Methodist Church/Russian Orthodox Church edition of "The Upper Room."

"His visit to Nashville will also afford an opportunity for him to pursue other aspects of shared assistance with publication, curriculum development and communication needs," said Dr. Harman.

Two boards represented

The international panel to which Dr. Harman gave his report is composed of elected directors and staff of two UM agencies: New York-based Global Ministries and Washington-based Church and Society.

Dr. Harman said that the Global Ministries board maintains contact with United Methodist groups beginning church development in the Soviet Union.

He praised the work of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, La., which is supporting the work of the church it has nurtured in Sverdlovsk (see UMR, June 21.)

Observers to visit

Bishop William B. Oden (Louisiana Area) is leading a group Sept. 17-28 to visit the developing congregation.

Observers will include the Rev. Dwight Ramsey, Broadmoor's senior pastor, and the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, a Global Ministries board director who will represent both the World Division and the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Dr. Dunnam is editor and chief executive officer of "The United Methodist Reporter."

European church leaders 'ready for new opportunities'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

United Methodists in Eastern Europe, unable to participate in new mission ventures in the past, say "they are now ready for new mission opportunities, due to the new freedom in their respective areas."

That's the assessment of Bishop C. Dale White (New York Area), reporting on the United Methodist European Commission on Mission Forum, Sept. 2-6.

Cooperation sought

"Now that Eastern European United Methodists have this new freedom, they wanted to know 'In what ways can we cooperate and be drawn into the common mission?' "

The European Commission on Mission is sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries and the British Methodist mission board. The group coordinates cooperative mission endeavors among partner churches in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

The commission was established by the global missions board in 1965. The first meeting was chaired by Methodist Bishop Franz Schaefer in Malmo, Sweden.

This year's meeting was held at the Reconciliation Retreat Center, between Budapest, Hungary and the Ukrainian border.

Representatives are typically from the European Central Annual Conferences in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Finland, Germany, and Austria. However, this time, global ministries officials also invited representatives of autonomous Methodists Churches from Spain and Portugal, as well as Eastern European United Methodists.

These leaders came from East Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Poland.

'Common effort'

"We have on various occasions consulted with Methodists from these individual countries in Eastern Europe, but we were never able to sit down altogether and say 'This is what we would like to do for the common effort,' and get an overall viewpoint," said Bishop White.

C. Dale White
. . . attended European forum

Other UM bishops in attendance at the meeting were Bishop J. Lloyd Knox (Birmingham Area); Bishop Hans Vaxby (Northern Europe Area) and Bishop Walter Klaiber (West Germany Area).

During one point in the meeting, Eastern European United Methodists had some concern about the General Board of Global Ministries' choice of partners in the U.S.S.R.

They questioned whether United Methodists from this country "value their consultation and inclusion in planning and strategy for work in the Soviet Union."

Bishop White said these representatives were assured that "not all the money will be going to the Russian Orthodox Church." Resources also will be available to Methodist churches to evangelize in the Soviet Union.

Network for aid

"I think they knew we were working with the Russian Orthodox Church to provide a network for humanitarian assistance for the Soviet Union, and new opportunities for Russian Orthodox churches to evangelize people," said Bishop White. "That had to be done as part of our overall strategy.

"But some of our partner churches know that they are small and have few resources, and the Russian Orthodox Church is huge. In working with humanitarian aid, we must work with the Russian Orthodox Church. We work with the partners that are best equipped to deliver on our behalf in the local church."

Bishop White told the Reporter that Eastern European United Methodists said their primary responsibility is to their own people and own congregations.

"Now that they have freedom to evangelize, they told us they need to spend their energy and resources in re-evangelizing their own people," he said.

"Since their economy is shaky—making the transition from socialism to capitalism—inflation is running very high. Many people are losing special benefits they had under socialist governments, especially elderly people. Many of those people are suffering, so the church needs to work ecumenically and with partner churches so the needs of their people are being met," said Bishop White.

European UMs plan missions

Eastern European United Methodists shared these plans for mission evangelism at the recent European Commission on Mission:

• Yugoslavian UMs are assisting Soviet refugees fleeing the U.S.S.R's worsening economy to find food and jobs in Yugoslavia.

• Polish UMs are sending preacher-evangelists from Poland to the Ukraine to start new congregations. Since these two groups speak a common language, Polish United Methodists plan to develop Bible study materials in the Ukrainian languages.

• Czechoslovakian UMs are re-evangelizing, with one church growing to 400 members.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

UM colleges among 100 'best buys'

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Seven United Methodist-related colleges and universities were recently named among the 100 educational institutions rated "best buys" in the nation by Money magazine.

In the magazine's second annual college guide, Centenary College of Louisiana, Shreveport, was ranked no. 22; Hendrix College, Conway, Ark., no. 29; and Florida Southern College, Lakeland, no. 50.

Also listed were Kentucky Wesleyan College, Owensboro, no. 59; Wesleyan College, Macon, Ga., no. 78; Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas, no. 91; and MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Ill., no. 95.

The magazine ranks colleges on the basis of student-faculty ratio, library resources, percentage of graduates who seek professional degrees, business success and financial data such as tuition and fees.

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Churches gather aid for Pinatubo victims

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

United Methodists in the Philippines say the Mount Pinatubo volcano crisis is "an occasion to show expressions of compassion and solidarity to become fellow workers of God."

"We are appealing to all people of goodwill to see in the suffering brought by Mount Pinatubo's eruption an opportunity to express solidarity in suffering, to do good by relieving human misery and restoring victims to their dignity," said Bishop Emerito P. Nacpil (Manila Area).

50,000 UMs affected

Bishop Nacpil is in the midst of relief efforts following the Mount Pinatubo volcano eruption last June. Some 50,000 United Methodists felt the aftermath of Pinatubo (see UMR, June 28.)

Requests for assistance have been made to United Methodists in the U.S., as well as to partner churches in the Methodist Church of Singapore, under Bishop Ho Chee Sin.

In a letter to the Reporter, Bishop Nacpil said Filipino United Methodists have named their relief efforts "Project ATOP." The initials stand for "From Ashes To Phoenix" symbolizing hope, joy and new life for the people of the Philippines.

Volcanic debris from Mt. Pinatubo has devastated the surrounding area in the Philippines.

Ernest Y. Khan, head of Project "ATOP" said, "The basic Filipino virtue of caring and sharing has eroded in recent generations to the detriment of the whole country.

"The shake-up of the Pinatubo crisis is a vehicle to transport many concerned Filipinos back to the ethnic virtue of caring and sharing of the old days."

United Methodists are collecting food, clothes, medicine, and tents from donors for distribution to Pinatubo victims. The annual conference also plans to rebuild damaged United Methodist churches and chapels and comfort distressed UM parishioners.

UMCOR 'pushing hard'

The Rev. Bruce Weaver, interim chief executive for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, said his agency is "pushing hard" for relief efforts in the Philippines.

During his visit to that country in July and August, he saw the devastation wreaked by the volcano in the form of sand, ash and gravel. Debris covered houses, building, crops, and forests, sometimes crushing them with its weight.

Dr. Weaver said rivers and streams were filled with sand, forcing water out of their banks and causing flooding in villages, towns and farmlands.

"They told me their biggest fear was when rains come, the sands will turn to mud," said Dr. Weaver, "and most recently, it did. There have been mudslides in the area, and the work will have to start all over again."

The Aetas tribe of indigenous people who were living on the slopes of Mt. Pinatubo, have had to relocate and probably will never be able to return to their home communities.

"The shake-up of the Pinatubo crisis is a vehicle to transport many back to the virtue of caring and sharing."
—Ernest Y. Khan

Looking to return

Dr. Weaver said the tribes-people were living in tents not far from Mt. Pinatubo anxiously looking to return "home."

"From government reports, that will not be possible within the next three to five years," he said.

There were 29 United Methodist Churches in that area and all of them were destroyed. When decisions are made about relocating the people then decisions about rebuilding the churches can be made, said Dr. Weaver.

UMCOR is receiving funds to assist in the long range rehabilitation effort through **Advance Special No. 240225-1.** Volunteers-in-Mission work teams will be assigned as soon as United Methodists in Manila are ready to receive them.

Faith connections

GONE TO THE DOGS: United Methodist layman **Max McQueen**, drama critic for the "Tribune" newspapers in Mesa, Chandler and Tempe, Ariz., gathered 88 dalmatians in a movie theater to help him review the re-release of Walt Disney's "101 Dalmatians." A photo of Mr. McQueen with his spotted sidekicks appears in the September issue of "Life" magazine. Mr. McQueen is a member of Central United Methodist Church in Phoenix and serves as its singles' ministries coordinator.

CHAIR ENDOWED: United Methodist-related Alaska Pacific University recently announced establishment of an endowed chair in Roman Catholic theology. The John Henry Cardinal Newman Chair was established by the Archdiocese of Anchorage with $1 million from Anchorage businessman **Larry Carr** and his wife, **Wilma**. Mr. Carr chairs the university's board of trustees. First holder of the chair is **Ralph Keen**, formerly on the faculty of DePaul University in Chicago. The chair is named for a 19th Century Catholic leader.

YOUTH SPEAKERS, TOO: Thirteen high-school-age youths attended a recent conference-wide lay speaking basic course led by the Rev. **Dale A. Howard** of First United Methodist Church in Grand Island, Neb. The weekend course consisted of 12 hours' classroom work plus public testimonies.

CAMPERS MEET, ELECT: Jessie Perry of Woodville, Texas, was elected president of the National Camping Methodists, Inc. at the group's recent annual gathering near Platte City, Mo. Campers came from as far away as Maine and Florida. Next year's rally will be July 16-19 in Mineola, Texas.

DON'T IGNORE OLDER ADULTS: Ignoring the skills and needs of older adults in the church is harmful to everyone, according to a retired United Methodist pastor known for his work in geriatrics. "To lose the sense of being needed is devastating," the Rev. **Elbert Cole** of Kansas City, Mo., told the denomination's Advisory/Coordinating Committee for Older Adult Ministries meeting. "Our world needs to call us of gray hair and put faith to work," Mr. Cole said.

FACULTY CHAIR: The Rev. **Edward A. Kail** of Ottumwa, Iowa, is joining the faculty of United Methodism's Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo., to occupy the new chair in Town and Country Ministries.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Making Sunday last through the work week

Chaplains at Snap-On Tools and R.J. Reynolds take their industrial ministries seriously

By DON DONATO

There's a little "in-joke" among clergypersons having a tough time in the parish: "Well, maybe I need to get appointed as a minister to Snap-On Tools!"

The Rev. Lee D. Downs says his brothers and sisters of the cloth should take such an appointment more seriously. He does. Since 1979 he has held the job they're talking about: Chaplain at Snap-On Tools in Kenosha, Wis.

Mr. Downs was a United Methodist when first named to the Snap-On post. But, he says, after re-reading writings by and about John Wesley, loyal Anglican priest and founder of Methodism, Mr. Downs became an Episcopal priest in 1986.

Chaplain for 25 years

Another veteran chaplain doing ministry in the work place is the Rev. Rodney C. Brown, a clergy member of the United Methodist Western North Carolina Annual Conference. He has been a chaplain at the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. (now a subsidiary of Nabisco) in Winston-Salem, N.C., for 25 years.

R.J. REYNOLDS PHOTO

The Rev. Rodney C. Brown, United Methodist chaplain for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., values workplace ministry because employees spend "40 hours a week for 40 years" at work.

Although Mr. Brown and Mr. Downs were interviewed separately, there was an obvious dovetailing of their concepts about the importance of chaplains in the workplace to both the employee and the employer.

Neither cracks jokes about their ministries in the workplace.

Mr. Downs said, "How do you make Sunday morning do something for the rest of the week? In this ministry I found it! It's taking Christianity—which I think is a really practical religion—and putting it smack-dab into the middle of the workweek in a major corporation and preaching good news.

"For me, it's an everyday sort of thing in a different way than it was as a parish pastor."

'Variety of problems'

Mr. Brown, noting that the chaplaincy at R.J. Reynolds is 40 years old, said, "We have the whole variety of human problems that are brought from home to the work place, as well as all those which arise on the job.

"These people are here 40 hours a week for 40 years of their lives, commuting from 40 miles away. A lot of living goes on right here.

"Marriage and family difficulties still are the number one problem; alcohol and drugs are number two in occurrence but the most expensive.

"In the last four years with the radical reorganization [following a leveraged buyout of the tobacco company by Nabisco], job stress is big No. 3."

No measure for caring

Speaking of the value of industrial chaplaincy, Mr. Downs asked, "How can you measure the significance of a once distressed mind no longer distressed? How can you measure the sense that the company does care?"

Mr. Brown said many companies are beginning to realize that they can't afford to be without pastoral care programs. He said that national estimates are that "10 or 11 percent of employees have drinking and drug problems" and that one in eight or as many as one in six need pastoral care.

"It costs at least a fourth to a third of a worker's salary to subsidize an employee with a drinking or drug problem, covering such things as absences from work, disability and down time on the job," Mr. Brown said.

"Once we look at costs like that, companies can't avoid looking at ways to correct such problems just from a practical, business-like viewpoint.

"Then there's the pastoral dimension. One of our managers said, 'You represent the dimension of hope, and we're not going to ignore that dimension.'

"Not a day goes by that someone doesn't seek us out because of issues of hope, such as grief and guilt," Mr. Brown said.

Mr. Downs observed, "A chaplain's work is visiting from mahogany desk to mahogany desk, or from punch-press to heat-treat to the forge, from people at their computer terminals to where they're cleaning the toilets."

Mr. Brown said that over the years, in confidentially tracking those employees who used the pastoral care services, "some have lost their jobs or drunk themselves to death, but more than 50 percent were able to get control of their job performance and improve their accident and sickness records."

Confidentiality respected

Both industrial chaplains said that their companies have never asked to use the counseling offices' information for making personnel decisions. The promised confidentiality for workers has been respected by company officials, they said.

Mr. Downs said the concept of the chaplain in the workplace sets a tone for Christian workers. "I think it helps the practicing Christian take their Sunday morning experience and make it real during the week. It makes them grapple with the concepts in a postive way: How do you love your neighbor when you have to supervise your neighbor? Or when you're supervised by your neighbor?"

SNAP-ON TOOLS PHOTO

KENOSHA, Wis.—The Rev. Lee D. Downs (right) does what he believes is the heart of ministry in the workplace. He is in the production area of Snap-On Tools in Kenosha, visiting with a company employee.

The two men noted that in the last decade the workplace ministries became so valued that the programs were expanded throughout the national and international networks of the firms, at the insistence of the firms' executives.

Mr. Downs oversees an employee assistance program that covers 7,000 families of Snap-On employees in all 50 states.

Mr. Brown is coordinator of the RJR Nabisco corporate employee assistance network, serving 10,000 families in Winston-Salem and serving another 20,000 employee-families outside Winston-Salem, in the U.S., Puerto Rico and London, where private counselors are paid for therapy given to employees and their families.

Mr. Donato is a former associate editor of the Reporter.

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DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY for 1400-member congregation with active program. Experience necessary. Salary negotiable. Send resume: First United Methodist Church of Jupiter/Tequesta, Attn: Dr. Robert Brittain, 815 E. Indiantown Road, Jupiter, FL 33477.

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UMs advocate taking Gospel to the workplace

By DON DONATO

United Methodists are among the frontrunners in a movement to take "a practical view of the Gospel" into the workplace.

They hope to do it through a "brokering" organization known as the American Association for Ministry in the Workplace, Inc. That group would recruit qualified clergy, place them in appropriate workplaces, pay their salaries and oversee their ministries to ensure uniformity and effectiveness.

James Townsend

George Schurman

Although it has been several years in developing, it's not something new but rather a return to the roots of Methodism, according to the Rev. James E. Townsend, chief executive of the church's chaplaincy program.

He alluded to the fact that John Wesley, founder of Methodism, was banned from many Church of England pulpits because of his "unorthodox" habit of going into workplaces such as the mines of Wales and the iron smelters of Birmingham and preaching Christ as Savior to people who had never seen the inside of a church.

Wesley said he was following the example of Christ, who went where fishermen and tax collectors were working.

"To put it into a framework that lots of men and women can relate to, industrial ministry is like the work of military chaplains," said Chaplain Townsend, retired from the U.S. Air Force.

"The military chaplain gets credibility with the troops by living the life they live: eating what they eat, going where they go, living and—if necessary—dying where the troops do. The troops come to trust the chaplain because the chaplain experiences what they do."

Presence means much

George R. Schurman, recently elected charter president of the American Association for Ministry in the Workplace, Inc. said, "A chaplain's presence on the work line has to mean a lot. He's a person who's trusted. He gets to know people on a first-name basis, and after a while he's going to be able to tell when a fellow's in trouble and be able to help him because of all that."

Mr. Townsend said, "The idea is not to use that ministry as a focus of evangelism but to help individuals who are at a point of crisis get through that crisis.

"People who are struggling with personal problems are going to be less effective in the workplace."

Mr. Schurman, a United Methodist layman and president of Schurman Oil & Gas Exploration Co. in Shreveport, La., said, "It's to the company's benefit to have a chaplain. Those hours lost due to personal problems cut into the bottom line of a business."

In theory, Mr. Townsend said, industrial chaplains are providing a witness that lets people know how important faith is in life so they will seek out a faith community outside the workplace.

Three categories

Workplace chaplains are in three categories: full-time, part-time and volunteer. Settings are as diverse as a tobacco company, a tool-making firm, a motel chain and a major airport, Mr. Townsend said.

Mr. Schurman said when he was elected a member of the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry 10 years ago, the workplace chaplaincy group "was a brainchild of the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries," where the Rev. Orris E. Kelly, chief executive, "had more to do with the brainchild than anyone else."

Mr. Kelly, a retired Army chaplain who preceded Mr. Townsend as head of the chaplaincy division within the Higher Education and Ministry board, now is executive director and executive vice president for operations of the workplace chaplains association.

The organization includes groups like the International College of Police Chaplains and representatives of Christian faith groups, including Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, American and Southern Baptist, Lutheran bodies and Nazarenes, as well as Jewish members, Mr. Schurman said.

Seminarians offered study tour in China

United Methodist seminarians may apply this month for a travel/study seminar in China Dec. 26-Jan. 11, 1992. It's co-sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Council of Bishops, the Association of United Methodist Theological Seminaries, and partner churches in China. For an application, contact the dean or president of your seminary, or write Marian Martin, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1342, New York, N.Y. 10115.

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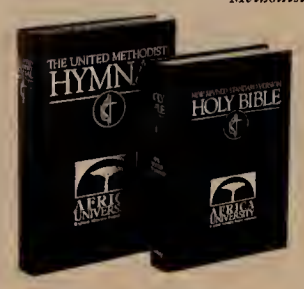

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

Coming Up At Broadmoor

September 29	Red Beans & Rice Dinner followed by Hymn Sing
October 9	Maxie Dunnam Study Begins
October 9 & 10	55 Alive AARP Mature Driving Course
October 12 & 13	Lay Ministries Fair
October 19	BUMC Golf Tournament
October 27 & 28	Church-Wide Banquets

This Sunday At Broadmoor

Dr. Charles B. Simmons Will Bring The Message

Anthem:
"A Jubilant Song" (Pote) — Combined Adult, Youth & Children's Choirs
Offertory:
"The Lord Is My Shepherd" (Pote) — Combined Adult & Youth Choirs
Liturgical Dance Choir

THE BROADMOOR BEACON

Broadmoor United Methodist Church edition

VOLUME 138 NUMBER 18 018130 10230 Mollylea Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815 Telephone: 504-924-6269 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 468 SEPTEMBER 27, 1991

A Faith Worth Singing About!

Our five new Disciple Bible Study groups are underway now, and recently their sessions focused on WONDER. Each day of the prior week the participants read about the Creation in Genesis, along with several Psalms and portions of the Book of Job. They then went to their meetings prepared to discuss personal insights and curiosities. The result in every group was two and one-half hours of lively dialogue that culminated in a common new appreciation for this fact of life: *There are some things too big for words!* There are experiences and encounters (even facts of our existence such as the FACT we exist) that go beyond our human ability to express in their fullness.

This will come as no surprise to you, still it's worth mentioning to emphasize how especially true that is of the Christian faith. It is and has always been too big for words! When we try to communicate what is thought and felt and meant and required as a result of being God's children and followers of Jesus, it is just not enough to talk about it with words. Hence, from the beginning, committed men and women, youth and children have tried to express and share their faith in all kinds of creative ways. As my colleague Jim Moore wrote recently,

We preach it.
We teach it.
We paint it.
We sculpt it.
We dramatize it.
We symbolize it.
We say it with banners,
We say it with puppets,
We say it with creeds,
We say it with poems,
We say it with instruments,
But, most of all, we SING it.

I agree. O how we love to sing our faith! It has always been true. After the Exodus, Moses' sister Miriam broke into a song of thanksgiving to God. David played his harp, wrote and sang Psalms of Praise. Jesus and his disciples chanted hymns in the Upper Room. The early martyrs, as they were burned at the stake or fed to the lions or led away to prison, sang. The great reformers Luther and Calvin believed music to be important both to their work, and to personal well-being. And truly that was the case with the Wesley brothers of early Methodism. John and Charles wrote hundreds of hymns that are still being sung today all over the world by all brands of Christians, including the band of believers at Broadmoor. *Like those throughout the ages, we are a singing church because we have a faith worth singing about.*

This Sunday we will celebrate that "singable faith" in special services of worship. All our adult, youth and children's choirs will be present to share anthems and to be consecrated in their ministry. You won't want to miss the marvelous music, the recognition and dedication of these musicians, and my first-ever sermon on the subject of "praising God through Music."

See you in church Sunday, SHALOM,

Chuck

Charles B. Simmons, Pastor

CELEBRATE

Special Choirs Dedication Services This Sunday

You will not want to miss Sunday morning worship at Broadmoor on September 29. An exciting part of our worship experience at all three services will be a special Choirs Dedication Service. Over 150 members of the combined Broadmoor choirs will take part in these services of song, celebration, and commitment, as we add a grand exclamation to the conclusion of our month-long emphasis on the ministries of the Spirituality Work Area. Children, youth, and adult choirs will sing praises to God, and dedicate our Music Ministries to His glory. A beautiful interpretation of the 23rd Psalm will be the Liturgical Dance Choir's special offering. Dr. Simmons will also deliver a special message of praise during these inspirational services.

If you or your children would like to become a part of our dynamic music ministries at Broadmoor, you can get more information from Wayne Millet, Dona Lusted, or Linda Kersey at the church office. We encourage you to catch the spirit of our music ministries at Broadmoor!

Broadmoor Liturgical Dance Choir at a recent worship service at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria.

Jean Roberts, Stewardship '91 Campaign Chairperson

Celebrate indeed!

Letters are being received this week by all in the church family telling that the time of celebration is at hand. Beginning now, and climaxing Oct. 27-28, Broadmoor is setting aside several weeks to celebrate its faith — celebrate through the dedication of its gifts to continue God's work through Broadmoor Church.

Heading the stewardship campaign 1991 is Jean Roberts, whose participation at Broadmoor is impressive. She and husband Murphy joined our church in 1960. Their two sons, Rusty and Gary, grew up in the church, participating as a family unit in its many programs.

Jean has long been one of the "doers," serving on most of Broadmoor's official commissions and committees. She has been president of the United Methodist Women, and has also been chairman of the Council of Ministries and the Administrative Board.

In speaking of the campaign to finance the new year's ministries, Jean, in her usual buoyant manner, talks of the joy of reminding members of the fullness of the program at Broadmoor. She enthusiastically points out how the warmth and diversity of this program reflects the commitment and diligence of the membership — a membership that has made the church continue to grow through its 36 years.

In the weeks ahead, several members of the congregation will share their thoughts on stewardship through the Beacon, other members will present their ideas at church services. All activities will lead toward two important nights to remember, Oct. 27 and 28.

All church members will gather on one of these nights in the gym to participate in an evening highlighted by an excellent dinner and delightful entertainment planned by a group working with Chuck Simmons. (A treat is promised!).

The banquet evenings will end as members walk to the Sanctuary to place their pledges on the altar, dedicating them to the mission of the church.

Prior to the banquets, during the week of Oct. 15-20 each family unit will be contacted by telephone and reservations secured. Marilyn DeLoach and Annette Tremblay are in charge of this large host/hostess committee.

John and Gwen Cook head the education committee and Grady Crawford, the follow-up committee.

The chairman of the two banquets is Mildred Taylor who promises a fine meal for a nominal cost, served at your table with style!

Before the evenings of commitment, a prayer vigil is scheduled at the church on Oct. 25-26. Alice Story is in charge and announces that sign-up sheets for the hours of the vigil will be available on Sundays, Oct. 12 and 20.

Co-chairmen of publicity are Hank Van Deutekom and Doris Darden.

These weeks then are a period of expectancy and hope at Broadmoor. And in Jean Roberts' words, "A time to celebrate!"

Saturday Evening Worship

September 28, 1991
6:00 p.m., Sanctuary
The Rev. Joe Donakey's Message
"The Ministry of Reconciliation"
II Corinthians 5:16-20
Special Music Presented By
The Women's Ensemble

AARP 55 Alive Mature Driving Course Offered

A two-day 55 Alive Mature Driving Course, sponsored by the Retirement Resources Committee, will be taught on Wednesday and Thursday, October 9th and 10th. The classes will run from 12:30-4:30 p.m. both days and will meet in Room 3 of the Activities Building.

In Louisiana all eligible drivers 55 years of age and older who take an approved driver improvement course must receive a discount on their auto insurance premiums, regardless of the company.

The Retirement Resources Committee recommends this course to eligible church members and others in the community.

To register, call the church office at 924-6269. A fee of $7.00, covering materials, is payable at the first class meeting.

food pantry

Membership Challenge!

Coming in October ... The Hunger Task Force MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE for the Food Pantry. GOAL: One food item per household (2,134 items). CAN we do it?

Prime Timers Elect Officers

The BUMC Prime Timers recently enjoyed a festive Mexican dinner complete with enchiladas, Spanish rice, mixed green salad and Acapulco pineapple pudding. The group listened to lively Mexican music while eating and then were informed about a local bank's program for mature adults.

After the dinner and program, the group elected officers for 1991-92. They are:

George & Bettie Lane — Presidents
Tom & Dorothy Pruyn — Vice-Presidents
Pat Daniel — Secretary

Plans were also announced for the annual **Harvest Moon Dinner and Dance** which will be held on November 8, 1991. Everyone is urged to mark their calendars for this gala ballroom dance event.

Our Life Together

In The Hospital

Our church staff has been notified that those listed below are in the hospital or have been hospitalized recently. Our prayers are with them and their families.

James Abbott
Kimberly Ashford
Della Mae Clark
Elizabeth Crabtree
Glenda Ellender
Patricia Hough
Marguerite Pierce
Ralph Porter
Clarence Ratzlaff
James Skidmore
Carolyn Unruh
Olney White
Mamie Willis
Donna Wood

Our Attendance

Church Membership	4,224
Sunday Worship 9/15/91	1,250
Sunday School 9/15/91	955
UMYF 9/15/91	57

Our Stewardship

Offering Received 9/15/91	$20,452.27

We Say Thanks To:

Acolytes — Kristy Michael and Andrew Roberts; Natalie Booth and Erin White; Telisa Byers and Kelly Marino who served 9/15/91.

Greeters — Mary, Wayne, Michael, Matthew & Kathryn Wroten; Shirley Penton; Carl Yager who served 9/8/91 and Jean Simon who served 9/15/91.

Weddings

Catherine Borne Dawson and Neil Joseph Bordelon were married September 14, 1991, by Dr. Charles B. Simmons in the sanctuary.

Susan Elaine Cocke and Mark Robert Kobayashi were married September 14, 1991, by the Rev. Kenneth M. Carroll.

Infant Arrivals

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Larrie H. (Margaret Golson) Butler, III, on the birth of their daughter, Kristi Marie Butler, born September 19, 1991. Paternal grandmother is Mrs. Jeanne Butler.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Brooks Glenn Franklin, III (Margaret Rose Chenevert) on the birth of their daughter, Lauren Elise Franklin, born September 7, 1991. Paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Brooks (Kay) Franklin, Jr.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. George Michael (Sandra Gaye Richards) Hollingsworth on the birth of their son, Michael Blake Hollingsworth, born August 31, 1991. Maternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Stanley (Helen) Richards.

We Express Our Deepest Sympathy To:

Mrs. Houston (Wallene) Smith and family in the death of her father, Mr. Wallace Givens of Jackson, MS.

Memorial:

In memory of Mr. George Keating Honeycutt, son of Dr. Julian Honeycutt, given by Bayou Reviewers Book Club.

BUMC GOLF TOURNEY
Saturday, October 19
LSU Golf Course
Call Tom Oliver
927-1722
For Entry Details

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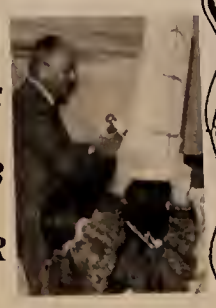

EXCITEMENT
Joy comes from achieving goals

BUMC MINISTRIES FAIR

Oct. 12, 1991 10am-4pm

Oct. 13, 1991 9:30am-2pm

"Coping As Christians"
A Maxie Dunnam Study
Wednesdays
October 9-November 13
9:00 a.m. Class Leader — Alice Story
or
7:00 p.m. Class Leader — Jim Massengale
Call the church office to register
924-6269

They're Coming!

October 6

Worship Bags for our Young Worshippers
Stay Tuned!

Bags For Broadmoor; Soup Labels, Too!

Broadmoor Elementary (our adopted school) students need our help! They have a big drive on to collect Community Coffee bags and labels from Campbell Soup cans which will be redeemed for dollars to be used in their library program.

Please save your bags and labels and bring them to Fellowship Hall where you will find a collection box. This is such an easy way to make a difference in children's lives. Won't you help?

WANTED

Elves Needed to Help
In All Areas of Advent
Creations Workshop

Contact:
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The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Weighing greed vs. giving

As many congregations enter a season of budget preparation and stewardship promotion, two recently released studies of giving offer surprising but relevant insights.

■ A University of California economist has debunked the widespread myth that the 1980s was a "decade of greed."

Prof. Robert McKenzie's research shows that Americans were more generous during the 1980s than in recent decades and that private charitable donations by individuals grew at a much faster pace in the 1980s (5.2 percent a year) than in the period 1955-1980 (3.1 percent a year).

■ A Princeton University sociologist has found that people who give to charitable causes do not fit some common assumptions about their motivation or background.

Professor Robert Wuthnow reports in a new book, "Acts of Compassion: Caring for Others and Helping Ourselves," that people who give time or money to charitable causes, including church members, typically are as materialistic and self-concerned as those who don't.

We see two paradoxical lessons and two implications for local churches in these findings.

First, the lessons:

✓ Prevailing assumptions that most Americans have succumbed to a "greed is good" ethic likely are false. Certainly, blatant examples of such an ethic can be readily cited, such as those responsible for the savings and loan debacle.

Nevertheless, it's good news that, in the face of media hype extolling getting, not giving, evidence exists **that large numbers of people possess an impulse to give, particularly to causes in which they believe.**

✓ The impulse to give often is muted, if not wholly negated, by what Christians across the ages have recognized as a sign of human sinfulness: our propensity to indulgent self interest.

That is to say, it is unrealistic to expect most people to give solely out of the goodness of their hearts. Most of us need a stimulus, a trigger, to awaken and unleash our impulse to share generously with others.

Second, the implications for congregations:

✓ Pastors and church leaders should not approach the matter of stewardship of the resources God has entrusted to us hesitantly or fearfully. Most Christians are more receptive to being asked to given than often is assumed—particularly when they are clearly shown how their gifts will advance the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

✓ The church's members should be informed clearly of what is required to conduct our church's ministry and outreach, and challenged to contribute a regular percentage of our income for their support.

In case there's any doubt, the two recent studies of benevolent giving put a fresh twist on an ancient truth: "Ask and you shall receive . . . Just be sure you ask!"

Why abortion debate centers on 'choice'

By EUGENE C. KENNEDY
Religious News Service

Commmentary

First in a series

Why has the raging debate about abortion in this country been so successfully orchestrated along the theme of a woman's right to choose rather than an unborn's right to life?

Why, indeed, has it been so difficult to focus steadily on the latter question, which is so central to the pro-life position and to our deepest considerations about the meaning and mystery of human existence?

This transformation of the subject from the right of a fetus to life into the right of a woman to make her own choices about her own life has been enormously successful.

Nothing, after all, is more essentially American than pitting the individual against a seemingly threatening institution, whether it is the church, big business, or the government.

Negative feelings

The late Frank Capra built his movie-making career on the same intuition about life in our country. Institutions are generally looked on as was His Majesty's government at the time of our revolution—blind, imperious and concerned only with the preservation of its own power.

These negative features often outweigh the fact that such institutions can also at times be noble, just and purposeful. They never seem that way in films, and they seldom appear that way in ordinary life.

The success of this approach is given witness in the way that politicians and officeholders swarmed, with few exceptions, to embrace the "pro-choice" position. The shift in focus allowed them to look away from abortion as such and to endorse the thoroughly American conviction that men and women ought to make their own decisions in personal matters.

The pro-life position, arguing that human life begins at conception, has been swallowed up, as if in suddenly massed clouds, by the proposition that human freedom begins with choice. Why has this shift in the terms of the debate, designed by public relations experts and ratified by the instincts of politicians, been so successful?

Attended to dynamics

It may be that pro-life leaders have not attended to the deeper dynamics into which the PR planners and the officeholders have instinctively tapped to make the pro-choice issue the center of the abortion debate.

These psychological realities center on women's feelings about men and the societal institutions, largely shaped by male influence, that have defined and limited their role and function throughout history.

The abortion debate has been restaged as one on a woman's right to choose because the latter question has simmered, unaddressed much less unanswered, just beneath the surface of women's lives for centuries.

Whether men want to acknowledge this or not, women have felt controlled unfairly and unfeelingly by men and the structures they have built. They feel that they have not been taken seriously as human beings, and they have at last found a way to express their pent-up emotion.

Religious leaders will never be able to focus successfully on the rights of the unborn until they have first given more than lip service to their concerns about the character, equality and inner lives of women.

Question exploded

Let's face it: the present debate concerns the rights of women because that is the question that has exploded from the depths of their experience. Women have had it with men who confidently tell them what they should feel and how they should live.

Women are convinced, at the level of nerve and bone, that most men, including religious leaders, are condescending in their behavior toward them. As they see it, the church, as an institution, would dominate their lives while it excludes them from the priesthood or other significant positions of authority at the same time.

Women who battle for choice may be arguing not so much for abortion as against the inconsistency of the men who, however motivated, come across as smugly trying to control their lives.

Women who battle for choice may be arguing not so much for abortion as against the inconsistency of the men who, however motivated, come across as smugly trying to control their lives.

It is against that attitude, so difficult for men to observe about themselves, that the present protests in favor of choice have been raised. Until those who champion life do something about their own still largely unexamined attitudes toward women, they will experience increasing difficulty in gaining a proper hearing for the rights of the unborn.

Dr. Kennedy is a writer and professor of psychology at Loyola University in Chicago.

Letters to the Editor

You rationalize right and wrong into a difference of opinion

Lurking within "A Good Model for Handling Church Conflict," by Cynthia B. Astle, (see UMR, Sept. 13), is a clue to the receding influence of churches in our society today. There, in a rather sophisticated way, Ms. Astle makes the case that we will be able to get along better if we rationalize right and wrong into a simple difference of opinion and get on with our routine.

Whether we like it or not, churches are teaching institutions, and as such must take a position on moral issues or they lose their usefulness to the society they serve.

Jesus acknowledged that not everyone who heard His words would follow Him. That, plus the threat of death, didn't make Him waffle His message 2,000 years ago. Why should His church not be equally steadfast?

C. M. McKeen, Jr.
Arlington, Texas

Bravo!

Bravo for Cynthia B. Astle's interpretive analysis, "A Good Model for Handling Church Conflict" (see UMR, Sept. 13).

Her writing gives me courage to stay the course for reasoned discussion of this and other divisive questions before our denomination.

Because of the work that the homosexuality study committee is doing on behalf of us all (reminiscent of the earlier work of the Hymnal Committee, with as promising a result I trust), I feel new energy rising. To lambast, to avoid, to deny the acrimonious tensions that can and will turn the simplest meeting into World War II is to engage in fighting behaviors with little potential for ultimate harmony.

You have lifted up another model. Thank you.

Vernon Story
Riverside, Calif.

Why so offended?

The Letters to the Editor in the Sept. 13 issue of the Reporter prompted me to refer to the Aug. 23 article by Stephen Swecker to find out why it was so offensive to the four male letter writers.

To me, the United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation sounded exciting and faith-filled, and Mr. Swecker's analysis of it added to my understanding of the event.

Maybe the men writing feel threatened by the fact that our male-dominated society and faith are in the process of being changed to reflect the worth of women as made in God's image also.

Sheila Burris
Deerfield, Illinois

Pontius' Puddle

What others are saying

"The judgment upon mainline churches is that they could all be better evangelists if they were prepared to receive the people God invited. But many times we want prepackaged Episcopalians as the object of our evangelistic effort. God says, 'Go into the streets and lanes of the city and bring them in in the real sense."

—The Rev. James Forbes, speaking to the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church

***

"Communication is supposed to be the antidote against our solitude. Never before have people had so many ways of communication and education, ways of reaching out to another, and never before have people been so separated. True communication must be embodied—it is an act of incarnation. It must be shared—it is an act of communion. To cut oneself off from others is to disconnect oneself from dialogue with God, with life itself."

—The Rev. John Chryssavgis, Russian Orthodox Church in Australia.

Faithfully yours

Holy Spirit, youths melt a president's heart

The year was 1976, and fresh out of college, I had taken a job as a news assistant for a major radio station in Atlanta.

One of my most memorable learning experiences was in November of that year, when I accompanied an award-winning newscaster to a presidential election-night celebration for former Georgia Gov. James E. (Jimmy) Carter.

Denise Stovall

Everybody who was "anybody" in Georgia wanted to join the "peanut brigade."

What was most exciting to me was not the catchy phrases in his victory speech and deciding which quotes were to be placed on the news, but seeing a famous Christian who exemplified Philippians 4:13 ("I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.")

Last week, nearly 15 years later, I found myself again in the same room with the man from Plains—now former President Jimmy Carter. This time, the scene was a special Pan-Methodist youth consultation on drugs, alcohol and violence at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta. He was the featured speaker.

As an "experienced journalist" who listens to speeches and then writes about them for a living, I find it tempting to ignore the movement of the Holy Spirit in our church events and just to "report the facts."

But I'm convinced that the Holy Spirit prompted the youths to ask President Carter for advice for families hurt by drugs, alcohol and violence. To everyone's surprise, one question drew from the former President a personal testimony of what can happen if families don't work together to fight substance abuse.

And the Holy Spirit certainly prompted Shane LaFlower of Hedding Memorial United Methodist Church in Barre, Vt., to confront Mr. Carter politely but firmly.

The young man, wearing an oversized T-shirt portraying the Rev. Martin L. King, Jr. and his words "I have a dream" continuously across the shoulders in bold red letters, stood straight and tall. Then he said:

"Mr. President, sir, we very much appreciate your time and concern for what we are doing. But we also need and would like your full participation in events such as what we have done here.

"Also, if you could ask—maybe coerce—some of your other friends to participate in these types of events. . . . We need your help.

"We are youth, and our numbers are strong, but we need the leadership and wisdom from generations before us."

Then, as the 85 young people applauded the young man's bold request, I watched those representatives from four branches of Methodism melt the heart of a former President. As President Carter pledged his support to them, including a promise to write President Bush about the Methodist youths' gathering, it was 1976 all over again for me. I believed that President Carter would use his "power and influence" for the glory of God.

President Carter is no longer a farmer, but I think he was seeing the growth of another crop—young people who want to work toward the dignity of all persons.

With a little nurture from a former President—and, of course, the Holy Spirit—I'm sure the Pan-Methodist Coalition will reap the harvest through a greater number of drug-free, alcohol-free, and non-violent youths.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Ms. Stovall is an associate editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : _____

(Last week's answer: Jeremiah 17:14)

Readings for week of Sept. 30
Monday: Psalms 27:7-10
Tuesday: Psalms 27:11-14
Wednesday: Job 42:1-6
Thursday: Mark 9:38-41
Friday: Mark 9:42-50
Saturday: James 4:13-17
Sunday: James 5:7-11

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

MEMBERSHIP RISES AGAIN: Total United Methodist membership increased for the fourth straight year during 1989. The church had 9.94 million lay and clergy members as of Dec. 31, 1989. That was up from 9.89 million at the close of 1988. Membership growth outside the United States accounted for the increase. While total U.S. membership slipped by 75,000 during 1989, overseas membership jumped by 120,000.The latest official figures reported 8.9 million United Methodists in the United States and 1.03 million United Methodists in Africa, Europe and the Philippines at the end of 1989. Since 1985, United Methodist membership overseas has more than doubled.

WHITE MALE MAJORITY: When some 1,000 United Methodists meet next year as delegates to the 1992 General Conference to set policy for the denomination, the decision-makers will be overwhelmingly white and male. But the number of delegates who are women or members of ethnic and racial minority groups will be up slightly from the most recent General Conference, 1988.

DEPICTION PROTESTED: The Rev. **Donald Wildmon** of the American Family Association has joined with an official of the National Federation of the Blind in protesting the depiction of a blind character on the ABC comedy series "Good and Evil." Mr. Wildmon, a United Methodist, frequently protests what he considers anti-Christian or immoral programming on television. He called a preview of the program "the most invidious and insidious perception and portrayal of blindness I have ever witnessed." In response, ABC has issued a statement saying that " 'Good and Evil' is an exaggerated parody of life, with the most outrageous caricatures imaginable. Not one character in this series is intended to be realistic or believable. Each is a parody of the most extreme qualities of the values presented by the title, 'Good and Evil.' "

RECORD BROKEN: Evangelist **Billy Graham** broke **Bruce Springsteen's** attendance record at New Jersey's Meadowlands Sports Complex during his five-day crusade that emphasized both commitment to Christ and social service. The evangelist's first-ever crusade in the Garden State, which ended Sept. 14, featured crowds that averaged 21,200 nightly with an average of nearly 1,800 people coming forward each time to make a commitment to Christ. The Friday night crowd of 31,300 was 10,000 above the arena attendance record that had been set by a 1984 Springsteen concert.

HEADS PRESS WOMEN: **Marj Carpenter,** manager of the Presbyterian Church's news services since 1978, has become the first religious journalist to head the National Federation of Press Women. In 1984, she became the first religious journalist to receive the organization's Woman of Achievement Award. Before joining the church news service, Ms. Carpenter served at three West Texas papers over 23 years.

BROKEN RANKS: Anglican bishops in Southern Africa have broken ranks with advocates of continued sanctions against South Africa, calling for the convening of a consultation to discuss "when and how" sanctions could be lifted.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Methodist youths take stand against drugs

'Rap songs,' hard realities and recommendations mark effort to fight drugs with faith

We should be, our neighbor's neighbor;
We can be, our neighbor's neighbor;
By the grace of God, we will be, our neighbor's neighbor...
Your friend may say, 'Man have a joint,'
Don't say yes, just to prove a point.
Don't let peer pressure go to your head,
Your friends will be alive, and you'll be dead...
Being a neighbor is hard to do,
But to be a good neighbor, you have to be true.
It shouldn't make a difference if you're black or white.
You should lend a helping hand in morning or night...

—Moses Dillard, Jr., Anthony Shawn Price and Anthony Kendrick
From the theme song, "Being Our Neighbor's Neighbor"

EDITOR'S NOTE: This special report by Associate Editor Denise Johnson Stovall covers the National Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence, sponsored in part by the United Methodist Council of Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence.

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

ATLANTA—Do you recognize a teaching of Jesus in this song? It's a modern version of the parable of the "good Samaritan."

This was part of a "rap theme song" written during the recent National Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence.

Sponsored by the United Methodist Church's Council of Bishops Initiative on Drugs and Violence, the convocation was Sept. 14-17 in Atlanta.

The sparks behind the fiery meeting were 85 youths representing four branches of Methodism:

- The African Methodist Episcopal Church
- The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- The United Methodist Church.

Ignoring decades of problems that historically split the Methodist traditions into these four American branches, the youths quickly bonded into a caring community.

They wrote and sang anti-drug "rap songs;" traded ideas for youth events; held impromptu prayer and praise sessions during their stay at Atlanta's Omni Hotel and made recommendations for future programs to former President Jimmy Carter (see related story on Page 2).

In setting the context for the meeting, the youths watched graphic films about the rise of alcohol use and drug addiction among young people.

They learned that alcohol and drugs are associated with:

✓ 68 percent of all deaths caused by manslaughter;
✓ 52 percent of all rapes;
✓ 20 percent of all suicides.

They learned that nine teens die and 355 are injured every day in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes. And 50 percent of all traffic deaths are caused by youths who drove vehicles after using drugs and alcohol.

One highlight of the meeting included a three-hour "pan-Methodist" rally on drugs, alcohol and violence. Some 200 young people from Atlanta-area churches helped the 85 youths from all over the country pack Big Bethel AME church—the oldest black church in Atlanta.

The Rev. Moses C. Dillard Jr., assistant pastor of Edgehill United Methodist Church in Nashville, and staff member of United Methodist Communications, noted that the rally was being held in the cradle of the civil rights movement.

However, he declared, "we have yet to be free, because we are enslaved to violence, drug abuse, alcohol and all other kinds of abuses.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

ATLANTA—Anthony Shawn Price of Christiansburg, Va., the Rev. Moses C. Dillard Jr. of Nashville and Anthony Kendrick of Columbus, Ga., perform the rap song," Being My Neighbor's Neighbor," during the National Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence. Some sessions were held at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta.

"But our hope just might be our young people—those of you who will commit to being our neighbor's neighbor."

During a Sunday afternoon rally, Bishop Felton E. May (Harrisburg, Pa., Area) challenged the young people to "be your neighbor's neighbor"

"There are three kinds of people," said the bishop: "Those who who have a gun in one hand and say 'What's yours is mine, and I'm going to take it'; the one who says 'What's mine is mine, and I'm going to keep it'; and the kind who says 'What's mine is yours, and I'm going to share it.'

"Young people, as a church, we've said 'What's mine is mine, and I'm going to keep it.' "

The bishop told a hushed crowd that The United Methodist Church contributed some $70,000 to bring these youths together to talk about drugs, alcohol and violence.

"But is the church prepared," the bishop asked, "to stay away from drugs and alcohol? Are we going to stop being hypocritical, doing what we do Monday through Saturday, then crying praise to God on Sunday?

"There are 8 million United Methodists. If we did what we said, we would have the power to remove alcohol ads from our community. Eight million United Methodists have the power—if we put our bodies where our mouths are.

"My son says, 'It's on you.' Is it possible that you will be the first generation to abstain and say, 'There will be no messing around here?'

"It's frightening to stand up in front of your friends and say, 'I'm not going to live like this anymore.' But no 4 Roses, Old Forester, Colt 45, or anything can separate us from the love of God."

Major funding and staff resources for the convocation were provided by the United Methodist General Council on Ministries and its General Boards of Church and Society and Discipleship, as well as the North Georgia Annual Conference and the Pan-Methodist Coalition on Drugs and Violence.

President Carter pledges help for churches' anti-drug effort

Reporter Staff Special

ATLANTA—What advice can a former U.S. president give to youth, coming from "dysfunctional families that have fallen prey to alcohol and drug abuse?

"The most difficult thing for me, as an American citizen, is to understand people who are different from me," said former President Jimmy Carter to the recent Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence.

But the 39th president of the United States said he could identify with families fighting to keep their loved ones from the dangers of drug addiction, alcoholism, and violence.

He told the 85 Methodist youths meeting in Atlanta last week that all three of his sons—Jack, Chip and Jeffrey—had experimented with drugs.

"As a prominent and successful businessman in Plains, Georgia, I was also chairman of the school board," said the president. "When my second son would be involved with drugs, the sheriff would call me and say, 'Jimmy, I think you need to find your son, becaue he's gonna get into trouble.' "

The president then promised to help United Methodist Bishops Ernest A. Fitzgerald (Atlanta Area) and Felton E. May (Harrisburg, Pa., Area), who were participating in the conference, as well as his friend, retired United Methodist Bishop William R. Cannon, "to extract from this conference not only your best advice but also information to use this conference as a pattern for follow-up in the future."

"Secondly I hope you would come up with a clear and concise and very substantive list of these recommendations," he continued.

"If I am given those, I'll be sure to give a list of those recommendations personally to President Bush and to the Georgia senators and chairmen of the committees who will be writing laws that deal with the drug and alcoholism and violence problem."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Youths vow in creed: 'We will, ourselves, abstain . . .'

The September 17th Declaration

"We the youth of the Pan-Methodist Church believe that the youth of today are pivotal in the battle against drugs, alcohol and violence. We believe that through careful work between youth and adults, and with a succinct statement of our desire to take a stand, we can effectively suppress today's drug, alcohol and violence problem.

- "We agree to portray ourselves as positive role models.
- "We agree to show compassion and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of others.
- "We agree to increase the amount of awareness through outreach programs and better publicity.
- "We will, ourselves, abstain from the use of drugs and alcohol, and from violence.
- "We vow that, if approached with drugs or alcohol, we will consider our creed, and reply with a statement such as, 'I'm on my way to Canaan Land—Don't hinder me.' "

—Presented by Cyreeta Collins, St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Chester, Pa., during the Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation, Atlanta, and subsequently adopted by that group.

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Young panelists testify vividly to dangers of abuse, violence

Reporter Staff Special

ATLANTA—At age 16, Lela Gregory has begun a new life.

"Sometimes I think about drinking, but one is too many and a thousand is not enough," says Lela. "So I pray to God to remove the desire to drink today. God takes care of me, and that's really neat!"

Lela was one of seven youth panelists discussing the dangers of drug abuse, alcoholism and violence during the recent Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation in Atlanta. One was a recovering alcoholic, two had used drugs, and one had been in a violent situation.

Family ignored problem

A resident of a prominent, middle-class community in Nashville, Lela said she started drinking when she was 11 or 12. She contends that her family probably ignored her problem during that first year because it was only occasional drinking. It helped her party, and "drinking was fun," she said.

But during the second year her drinking problem got worse. She began to get hangovers, and one of her friends said, "I have something that will fix it." Soon she began to take illegal drugs to cure the hangovers.

"In terms of talking about violence, I got into a pattern of violent relationships," said Lela. "I would say, 'If you hang out with me, I will give you whatever you want.' "

Youths attending the convocation were stunned with disbelief when Lela told how she "cut on herself" in an attempted suicide, then overdosed on drugs.

"When the doctor would ask, 'Are you trying to kill yourself?' I would laugh at him. I couldn't care less. I didn't like life."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

ATLANTA—Mary Carlsen (left) and her daughter, Miranda, share a quiet moment outside the Carter Center during a break at the Pan-Methodist youth conclave.

Switched churches

Lela told the Methodist youths that the things that changed her life were attending rehabilitation meetings and switching churches. Now she's a member of Edgehill United Methodist Church in Nashville.

"Most adults in churches have a tendency to say, 'Drugs are bad; alcohol is bad,' " said Lela. "I'm not arguing against that. But it's portrayed that you are bad for doing those things.

"It was hard for me to quit, because I was on a guilt trip," said Lela. "There was a lot of pressure to be Christlike, and I wasn't. . . . At my former church, I had a lot of experience with hypocrisy.

"Now, if I feel really bad about what is happening to me, I can pray to God. Before, I kinda lost touch with God, but now my spiritual life is important to me."

Did drugs for 4 years

Sixteen-year-old Miranda Carlsen of Salt Lake City said she has been doing drugs for four years. She started smoking marijuana with a boy who grew the plants at his home.

"I was sexually abused from ages 5 to 12, and I think I was using the drugs as a scapegoat," she told the Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation.

In an interview with the Reporter, Miranda and her mother, Mary Carlsen, said the family is slowly coping with its problems with the assistance of supportive United Methodists.

The Carlsens are members of Christ United Methodist Church in Salt Lake City. However, Miranda attends youth fellowship at the newly formed Jordan United Methodist Church, where the Rev. David Butler is the new pastor.

Mr. Butler has started a strong youth ministry through a $12,500 grant from the church's National Youth Ministry Organization's Youth Service Fund.

Last May, Miranda ran away from home for three weeks.

"I was downtown begging for money to get high, and nobody would stop me," she said. "I think the only person who wondered where I was, was David. Finally, my mother had me picked up by the police. When they found me, I was drunk on 32 ounces of vodka."

Miranda said she is grateful for a church like Jordan "that has ice cream parties on Friday nights, and other stuff to do, so kids won't be tempted by people with drugs.

"David Butler is doing some good things for the youth, and I feel I fit in."

By comparison with the two girls' stories, Anthony Shawn Price's story sounded like a scene from a movie.

Phony drug deal

He was hanging out with friends who had planned a phony drug deal using plastic bags containing a mixture of flour and sugar. But the customer wanted to test the product before the purchase, and the drug deal went sour.

After the customer realized he didn't receive genuine drugs, Shawn's friends hopped into the car, and a chase began. Suddenly the car in which Shawn was riding stopped, his two friends jumped out and left Shawn in the vehicle to face an angry drug user.

"There was a gun on the seat, and I knew the guy was coming to get me, so I shot at him," said Shawn, who attends Asbury United Methodist Church in Christiansburg, Va.

"Luckily, I only hit him in the leg. Then I ran and left the car with the motor running."

Shawn told the youths that "it was by the grace of God" that he did not kill the would-be drug user, actually only a young man himself.

Shawn also cautioned the youths to "know who you hang with."

"Your friends might do drugs and you'll never know," he said.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

BISHOP GOODSON DIES: Retired United Methodist Bishop **W. Kenneth Goodson**, 78, of Winston-Salem, N.C., died Sept. 17 after a lengthy illness. He was elected a bishop in 1964 and headed the denomination's Birmingham (Ala.) and Richmond (Va.) areas before retiring in 1980. He was president of the Council of Bishops in 1976-77 and president of the General Board of Discipleship in 1972-80.

PENSIONS EXECUTIVE: **Diane O. Pinney**, treasurer of the United Methodist General Board of Pensions in Evanston, Ill., since 1987, will leave that post Oct. 1 to become an assistant general secretary of the church's General Council on Finance and Administration in Evanston with responsibility for administering the local church insurance program sponsored by the fiscal agency. She will succeed **Ruth Ann Baumeister**, who is retiring.

FOUNDATION PRESIDENT: **Raymond F. Devery**, a native of Illinois and a former banker, college administrator and foundation director, began duties Sept. 1 as president of the United Methodist Foundation for Christian Higher Education in Nashville. The foundation is affiliated with the denomination's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

CONSIDER 'COVENANT': As many as 200 local consultations across the nation are being planned during the next two years by the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) to consider the "covenanting" proposal for greater Christian unity that now is under study by the nine U.S. churches that are consultation members. The conferences are intended to help people understand the proposal by providing an ecumenical setting in which people from different denominations may discuss the document in each other's presence, according to the Rev. **David W.A. Taylor**, COCU general secretary. The United Methodist Council of Bishops recently called for further study of the proposal before it is presented to General Conference, perhaps in 1996.

WORSHIP ON TV: Worship services from the 8,500-member St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Houston will air on the Vision Interfaith Satellite Network from October to March. Check local listings for viewing times. St. Luke's senior pastor, the Rev. **James Moore**, has written, directed and hosted weekly TV shows and specials. His sermons are telecast weekly by KPRC-TV, the NBC affiliate in Houston and he served as the "Protestant Hour" preacher from December 1990 to March 1991.

NETWORK PROPOSED: Formation of a network for United Methodists interested in becoming advocates for refugees has been proposed to the church's Joint Panel on International Affairs. Network participants would be kept informed on immigration and refugee trends and developments, legislative and legal issues and perspectives of United Methodist agencies. The proposal now goes to the boards of Global Ministries and Church and Society.

Church brings health care close to home

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

"All we had was hope and prayer," says Rexine Bryant.

The results of that hoping and praying show what a local congregation with a vision to help its neighbors can do.

When Ms. Bryant, a former nurse, was appointed pastor of Brookside United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kan., six years ago, she realized the enormous need for affordable health care in the church's Planeview neighborhood.

Rexine Bryant

In that economically depressed, racially mixed area, 8,000 people live in less than a square mile.

Many residents are children of the working poor—people who do minimum-wage service or seasonal jobs that provide no medical benefits.

Without adequate medical care, Ms. Bryant said, Planeview children are subject to hearing loss due to untreated ear infections or rheumatic fever from untreated sore throats and many other preventable medical problems.

"The need was so great it was an open, weeping wound," said Ms. Bryant.

Do something about it

The 100-member Brookside congregation decided to do something about it. Members were already reaching out to their neighbors through a low-cost clothing store, the total income of which goes to Wichita's United Methodist Urban Ministry for food.

Brookside leaders decided to open a health clinic at the church. The only trouble was, the church didn't have the room or the money. But it did have hope, prayer, willingness to work and Rexine Bryant.

And behind Rexine Bryant was the Wichita District of The United Methodist Church.

In May 1988 the district council on ministries approved fund solicitations for a $53,000, 1,800 square foot community ministry center addition to the Brookside church to house a health clinic and the clothing operation.

Under the leadership of District Superintendent Omer G. Tittle, the district clergy got behind it, Ms. Bryant said. "Out of 55 churches, only two didn't contribute."

A loan from the church's General Board of Global Ministries allowed construction to begin.

After an appeal for clothing and medical supplies, Ms. Bryant continued, "a semi-trailer of supplies arrived in September."

By late October, the building was finished and the first patients walked through the door.

Clinic is debt free

Today, the $53,000 addition to the church to house the clinic and clothing operation is debt free—in large measure thanks to church members.

"It was incredible, and I mean incredible," said Ms. Bryant, referring to the outpouring of support and the swiftness with which the project was completed.

Part-time health care professionals now treat some 1,200 patients a year at the clinic, and "we're growing all the time," office manager Sharon Beaver told the Reporter.

Nearly half the patients are children, she said.

If patients or their families have enough money, they pay $3 for a visit "to help them maintain their dignity," she said.

Ear and eye infections, head lice and severe diarrhea are among common problems treated. Clinic staff also provide well-baby checkups and care for chronically ill patients with such diseases as asthma, arthritis, heart disease or diabetes.

Critically ill or seriously injured patients are referred to area hospitals or specialists.

"We have received donated medications from hospitals, doctors' offices and the health department," Ms. Beaver continued.

Health kits given out

Then there are the health kits.

"When a new patient comes in," says Ms. Beaver "we fill a bag with enough for all members of the family. We give them toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, hair brushes and combs, disposable razors for adults and body lotions—all donated."

In spite of all the donations, starting and running a medical clinic requires cash.

Grants from the United Methodist Health Ministries Fund, a Wichita-based ministry, have provided a major portion of it—some $62,000 in a start-up grant for 1989 and 1990 and a $35,000 grant for this year.

The fund is the result of the $32 million sale in 1985 of the Kansas West Annual Conference-related 800-bed Wesley Hospital to Hospital Corporation of America. Interest from the sale provides money for grants to health-related projects in Kansas. Preference is given to United Methodist agencies and churches.

However, the health ministries grants are designed to help start projects, Ms. Bryant said, not support them indefinitely. The clinic is funded only through February 1992.

"We are really scrambling to find additional funds to go beyond that date," she said.

Some comes from local congregations like 1,400-member College Hill United Methodist Church, located some five miles away, which draws membership from across the city.

Brookside and College Hill have entered into an agreement to share ministry, said Ms. Bryant.

The College Hill congregation has professional people—accountants, attorneys, nurses, builders and others—who share their skills with the clinic, she said.

WICHITA, Kan.—Jeff Henderson, a physician's assistant, gives special attention to an unidentified young patient at the health clinic operated by the 100-member Brookside United Methodist Church in an economically depressed neighborhood of Wichita.

Fervor ahead for black church

United Methodist News Service

The Rev. Frank Portee III believes a little evangelistic fervor could be the key to revitalizing and expanding the nearly 2,500 black United Methodist congregations.

As new program secretary for African-American Ministries in the National Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, Mr. Portee acts as a liaison with those congregations.

An activist in community development, he pointed out that the congregations that have most successfully moved from near-death to a booming growth are those "where pastoral leadership and lay leadership have bonded together and made a vital difference."

"The flame and cross are not there for decoration," Mr. Portee said, referring to the United Methodist Church symbol. "That flame is the fire we need in our churches, our preachers and our laypeople."

Ordained in 1980, he has served as pastor for both rural and urban churches in the South Carolina Annual Conference. Before joining Global Ministries, he was a project director at the Washington-based Interfaith Action for Economic Justice.

Mr. Portee says he believes the old traditions of preaching, teaching and healing can be used effectively today in a contemporary and community-oriented way.

Through his doctoral studies at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, he hopes to put together a model of leadership development, particularly for black congregations.

He said he also shares the vision of the Rev. Randolph Nugent, the board's chief executive, of bringing the National Division back to the forefront "of standing up for justice and liberation."

'Bootleg' Scrolls blasted

DURHAM, N.C.—Editors of a recent "bootleg" version of the Dead Sea Scrolls missed the boat, says Duke University archaeologist Eric Meyers.

A version of the scrolls was published recently at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, using a concordance and a computer but relying on older versions which scholars generally agree are less reliable.

"What is missing" [from the Hebrew Union College version], says Dr. Meyers, "is discussion of the image enhancement technologies. These are allowing us to correct mistakes in the older versions."

New image-enhancing technology allowed scholars to read areas of the scrolls that had been unreadable. In some instances, the enhanced readings revised the interpretation of the documents.

A comparatively small circle of scholars has access to unpublished portions of the scrolls, and these scholars have come under some public criticism for seeming to delay publication of information related to the scrolls.

What will heaven be like? Famous, not-so-famous answer

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

What will heaven be like?

Everyone knows the question has been pondered endlessly. Everybody has some idea of what it will be like.

But the Rev. Michael Seed, the ecumenical adviser to British Cardinal Basil Hume, decided to ask a wide variety of people—including children, royalty, actors, writers, artists, pop stars, politicians, and even some religious leaders—to go public with their notions about the hereafter.

In addition to querying contemporaries, Mr. Seed assembled passages from books and scriptures of the great faiths.

The result is a book titled "I Will See You In Heaven, where animals don't bite . . .", published by St. Paul Publications in England. Arrangements are being made for publication of the book in the United States.

Some autographed letters Mr. Seed received from contributors will be auctioned off Dec. 11 in Westminster Cathedral Hall. All proceeds will go to the cathedral's night shelter for the homeless.

What will heaven be like?

Mother Teresa of Calcutta writes, in the preface that "heaven for me will be the joy of being with Jesus and Mary and all the other saints and angels, and all our poor—all of us going home to God."

Sir John M. Templeton, the Presbyterian philanthropist who created the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, says that "each of us can create here and now our own heaven or hell."

General Eva Burrows, international leader of the Salvation Army, writes that "to the Salvationist, heaven is a gloriously happy place, because a Salvationist does not die, he is 'promoted to glory.' "

For eight-year-old Denzil, one of several youngsters overheard discussing the issue, the vocabulary was more than adequate. "It's a place where animals don't bite!"

From the writings of Julian of Norwich comes the thought that in heaven "we will understand why he (God) allowed sin to be. And in knowing this we shall have endless joy in God."

The Rev. Michael Taylor, director of Britain's Christian Aid relief agency, writes that "we must work for heaven to come on earth or we cannot expect it to come at all. The poor ask of us and give to us nothing less than this hope, and neither does God."

Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, former president of the Vatican Secretariat for the Union of Christians, writes that "unity of all Christians can be pursued and achieved on earth but only be realized perfectly in its fullness in heaven, and then our joy will be complete."

A 10-year-old girl named Lorraine writes that "heaven will be happy, no guns, no gulf crisis."

From one of Billy Graham's books comes the thought that "since we are all sinners, our only right for admission to heaven lies in the provision God made for our sins: his son, Jesus Christ."

Julian Filochowski, director of the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, writes that "when the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, when Nelson Mandela was freed from his incarceration, dreams came true, the innermost yearnings were realized, and we glimpsed a tiny fragment of heaven."

The Rev. Emilio Castro, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, notes that "attempts to define the heaven, hell or doomsday exactly have failed since the early church. That's why all we need to know of heaven might be expressed by the Pauline words which refer to the hidden wisdom of God: 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him, God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God' (1 Corinthians 2:9-10)."

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Physicians Medical Plaza Under Construction

Methodist Hospital is pleased to announce the construction of a three-story, 50,000 square foot medical office building located on the Methodist Health Complex campus.

According to Methodist Health System Foundation Executive Vice President Richard A. Henault, the Physicians Medical Plaza features custom designed suites with an emphasis on convenient accessibility for both physicians and patients. "Approximately 45,000 square feet are available for physicians' offices," Henault says. "The balance of the building is designated for public areas and ancillary support services."

Located within walking distance of Methodist Hospital, between the Methodist Cancer Center and the Methodist Psychiatric Pavillion, the new office building has been developed on land made available by the Hospital to a limited partnership formed and managed by the Warren Healthcare Group, Inc., as the general partner, and including Medical Staff members as limited partners. "This unique organizational structure provides an opportunity for physician tenant owners to maintain a net effective lease cost at less than outside market rages," Henault says.

"Physicians opening offices in the new facility participated in designing the physical floor plan and interior decor to suit the specific needs of their individual practices," he continues.

The new facility includes a diagnostic substation, offering services from areas such as Radiology and Laboratory, for patient and physician convenience.

Henault explains that the construction of the new medical office building reflects Methodists' continued, long-term positive outlook for sustained growth and success in providing medical services to the people of the Greater East New Orleans community.

"The success of Methodist Hospital is directly related to the success of each individual Medical Staff member's practice as well as having an appropriate complement of medical specialties and clinical capabilities," he says. "As the East New Orleans community and the Hospital Complex continue to grow, it is important to make it convenient and attractive for physicians to practice medicine at Methodist Hospital. Offering well designed and attractive office facilities conveniently adjacent to our full-service hospital, as well as the availability of the other clinical components of our campus, provides us with a very attractive office alternative for physicians who are not currently located on campus."

The Physicians Medical Plaza is a three-story, 50,000 square foot medical office building located on the Methodist Health Complex campus.

Another factor in the decision to build the Physicians Medical Plaza is the full occupancy of the Medical Center of East New Orleans. Henault notes that numerous physicians have expressed an interest in relocating to the Methodist campus but space had not been available. "Physicians are interested in and want to practice at Methodist Hospital," he says.

The Physicians Medical Plaza is a stucco veneer building with open atrium lobbies and reflective coated vision glass windows. It incorporates the architectural design elements attempting to bring to bear a cohesiveness of buildings on the Methodist Health Complex campus. Architectural highlights include a canopy-covered driveway at the main entrance for weather protection as well as a drop-off and pickup area for patients and visitors. The first floor main lobby atrium, which may also serve as a visitor waiting area, features natural lighting and comfortable, contemporary decor. The main lobby extends to the driveway through a spacious vestibule formed by two sets of electric doors to enhance wheelchair access.

Parking facilities include 150 spaces surrounding the building with designated spaces for physicians, visitors, employees and the handicapped. An entrance on the west side of the building, in close proximity to the entrance of the Hospital, also provides for physician convenience.

A special feature available to individual offices is an on-line telecommunication system between the Physicians Medical Plaza and Methodist Hospital. It is anticipated that physicians will have direct access to the Hospital information system.

Developed and managed by the Warren Healthcare Group, Inc., as the general partner, the Physicians Medical Plaza was constructed by the Lott Group of Houston, Texas, the Port City Group, Inc., of Lake Charles, Louisiana, and Broadmoor Construction of New Orleans. Phil and Wilke Architects is the design architect.

Methodist Cancer Center Expands

In just over two years after the opening of the Methodist Cancer Center in October 1988, the area's only freestanding, hospital-affiliated cancer treatment facility has expanded.

The more than 2,000 square foot addition, which extends the facility toward Read Boulevard, increases the size of the existing Cancer Center by almost one-third.

"The need for the Cancer Center's services in the community, its successful reputation, and a growing Medical Staff contributed to the need for expansion," says Cameron Barr, Executive Vice President, Hospital Operations.

"The Methodist Cancer Center was developed to serve the large number of cancer patients in the Hospital's direct service area and in response to the high incidence of cancer in Louisiana," says Lori Cupit, Methodist Cancer Center Director.

... More than 2,000 patients have been evaluated and treated at the Methodist Cancer Center. In addition to its significant patient census, the Center has expanded its reputation by participating in such programs as the National Bone Marrow Donor Program, National Cancer Survivors Day, and the introduction of the American Cancer Society's "I Can Cope" educational program and "Reach to Recovery" to help patients, family and friends with the day-to-day issues of living with cancer. The Center was also selected by the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project and the National Cancer Institute to participate in a special clinical trial project.

"The major concern of the Methodist Cancer Center is the health and well-being of each patient," Cupit says. "The expansion, however, complements this concern by enhancing patient comfort, convenience and privacy."

Rendering of the expanded Methodist Cancer Center.

The expansion project includes the addition of a large conference room for tumor board meetings, private family counseling, and workshops and presentations for Center staff. Cupit notes that the conference room will be named in memory of Jonathan Nelson, son of Chaplain Judy Nelson, and namesake of the Hospital's Cancer Fund. The project increases the number of examination rooms for medical oncology to seven, including a special procedure room for bone marrow, and other technical procedures.

The outpatient chemotheraphy area doubles with a total of eight treatment chairs. "The building has been designed to incorporate the chemotherapy area at the end of the buildings so that our patients will be able to look out of large windows into a specially landscaped area while they undergo their treatments," Cupit says.

Other expansion highlights include the addition of the existing two physician offices, a larger nursing station, substation and medical records facilities. Cupit notes that the new physicians' offices are located adjacent to examining rooms for both patient and physician convenience. A holding station is also provided as a comfortable, private area for checking patients' vital signs prior to physician examinations.

A circular hallway with two pass-through areas connects other portions of the building, and enhances the convenience for patients, physicians and nursing staff.

The existing facilities have been renovated to include an expanded waiting area, a financial counseling center and office space for support services such as dietary and social services. "We want to be able to offer as many services as possible in the Center, in order that our patients do not have to go back and forth from one building to another for comprehensive care," Cupit adds.

The building's exterior matches the existing architecture with design points complementing and enhancing the main entrance to the building. The parking area has also been expanded. New exterior landscaping has been started. The interior design incorporates the same color schemes and decor points that are found in the original building.

Advanced Lithotriptor Now at Methodist

The newest, most advanced, and most comfortable technique for eliminating painful kidney stones without surgery is now available at Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital.

The breakthrough lithotriptor represents significant progress in the nonsurgical treatment of kidney stones. The advanced equipment is safe, fast, accurate and requires minimal anesthesia. Additionally, the water bath technique, used in other lithotripsy equipment, has been eliminated in addition to restrictions on the patient's age, height and weight. The unit is housed in a specially equipped mobile trailer.

"This unique service is the first and only one of its kind in East New Orleans," said Richard A. Henault, Executive Vice President, Methodist Health System Foundation, who was intimately involved in the coordination and implementation of the new technology. "The provision of lithotripsy services further supports and enhances the Hospital's mission of being the major health care provider in East New Orleans."

"In short, it allows us to continue to expand upon the depth and breadth of clinical services offered to the community," he continues. "The technology affords us the opportunity to meet a clinical need in a cost-effective, convenient fashion. We're proud of this latest addition to our service capabilities."

Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center Administrator Mike Gossman notes that the equipment also enhances patient comfort and privacy. "Elimination of the water bath with this advance also eliminates the need for patients to disrobe in a tub," he says. "Patients are situated on a treatment table throughout the process."

The mobile lithotriptor, which will serve hospitals throughout Louisiana and Mississippi, will be located outside the Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center several days each month. Methodist is the only hospital in the East New Orleans area to provide this new service to the community.

Norman Galen, MD, Urologist and President of the Gulf South Lithotripsy Consortium, says that painful stones in the kidney or anywhere in the ureter can be successfully eliminated in more than 90% of the cases classified as requiring surgery.

Dr. Galen explains that the lithotriptor utilizes shock waves to pulverize kidney stones which eliminate the need for surgical treatment. A series of quick, short shock waves are directed at the stones causing them to break into small particles. In most cases, tiny fragments are passed naturally through the urine a short time after the procedure. Dr. Galen points out that the patient receives an analgesic prior to the lithotripsy procedure. Although the patient is mildly sedated, the individual is able to talk throughout the whole procedure.

Lynette Ricardo, CST, and Dot Stewart, RN, of the Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center prepare for a patient.

"The new lithotriptor is faster and more accurate than other methods because of enhanced x-ray capability in determining the location of the stone," Dr. Galen continues. "Additionally, we can tell immediately that the stone has been broken."

The simple outpatient procedure takes approximately one hour to perform. Following a brief recovery period, the patient is discharged, and returns to routine activities within two to three days.

"There are significant advantages in utilizing this equipment," Dr. Galen says, "including a shorter recovery period, less discomfort for the patient, and enhanced accuracy." Because we are sharing this new modality with other institutions, the costs to the patient are lower. Most costs are absorbed by the patient's insurance company.

Recognized as a breakthrough treatment in the mid-eighties, lithotripsy provides an alternative to surgical treatment of kidney disease. The surgical procedure required as much as ten days of hospitalization and up to three months of recovery before a patient could resume normal activities.

"This equipment has no water bath and minimal anesthesia. Therefore, it is a significant step in medical progress for the urological field," Dr. Galen says. He cautions that not all patients are candidates for lithotripsy, however. Before treatment is scheduled, each patient is individually evaluated for appropriateness of the procedure by his or her physician.

Dr. Galen also emphasizes that the treatment will not prevent new stones from forming. "The South is considered a stone belt, possibly due to the warm weather conditions here," he says. "If a patient has one kidney stone, there is a 30% chance that he or she will have a second stone develop within five years. If a second stone is present, there is a 60% chance of having a third stone within five years. It is therefore essential that the patient receive proper medical management since stone recurrence rates can be drastically reduced in many instances."

The mobile lithotriptor is FDA approved.

Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital celebrated its 23rd year of service to the community on September 25th.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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We Gather Together at the Lord's Table

This week's column is written by Dr. J. Philip Woodland, chairperson, Legislative Liaison Committee and Monroe District Superintendent.

"Thou preparest a table before me . . ."

The familiar words of the psalmist bring to mind some of the tables the Lord has provided.

There is the family table where we gather . . . sharing stories, hopes and hurts, passing on traditions, weaving together the fabric of the family as we break bread together. Sundays, Christmas, Thanksgiving, birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, homecomings, and even "going homes" we celebrate by gathering around the table. As we gather grace is said, chicken, rice, and broccoli passed, the gravy spilled, the coffee savored, ideas discussed, feelings expressed, plans explored, old times recalled, memories stored to be recalled at other times. The family was shaped and formed as we gathered at the table. The table is not so full now. Those large family gatherings are few and far between. Truly it is a table the Lord prepares.

This Sunday we are invited to another table . . . the Lord's table. It's another Sunday dinner with the church family gathered at the table. This World Communion Sunday the table is especially full. With sisters and brothers in Christ around the world we gather at this table. As the table at home helps to pass on those traditions that grow a sense of "we," of "our family" so at the table this special day we are made aware of the larger family with whom we break bread this day. The "we" of the church is inclusive of all who claim the name of Christ. In every land the bread is broken, in every tradition the cup is shared, in every tongue the words declared "This is my body broken for you. This is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many. Do this in remembrance of me." In the sharing of the bread and wine we are bound to one another to be "for the world, the body of Christ redeemed by his blood." This Sunday as we receive bread and wine from a table that extends around the world, we pray once more: "By your spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in that final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet."

"Thou preparest a table before me."

Thank you, Lord.
Dr. J. Philip Woodland

Mission Trips: Where the Spirit of God is Alive . . .

The words, "camp meeting" have taken on new and different meanings for United Methodist youth across Louisiana. Camping more than ever means trips to distant places to paint, plant, build, tear down, teach, harvest and learn.

Often, surprised parents listen to stories of their adolescents happily and willingly involved in chores and tasks that wild horses couldn't drive them to do in more familiar settings. Manual labor, wrapped in the name of Christian service, is a different experience in the context of the mission trip.

Caney Lake Camp was severely damaged due to the high winds of last spring. Church youth teams like the Munholland UMC's Junior High group went in early summer to clear the damaged sites and bring order out of chaos.

Likewise, youth groups from First UMC's in Alexandria and Lafayette spent the week of June 24-28 in Monroe removing sheetrock and paneling at homes damaged by the same heavy winds and rains. The group worked under the auspices of the Northeast Louisiana Inter-Faith Flood Relief, Inc., headed by Alexandria's First UMC's pastor, the Reverend Henry Blount.

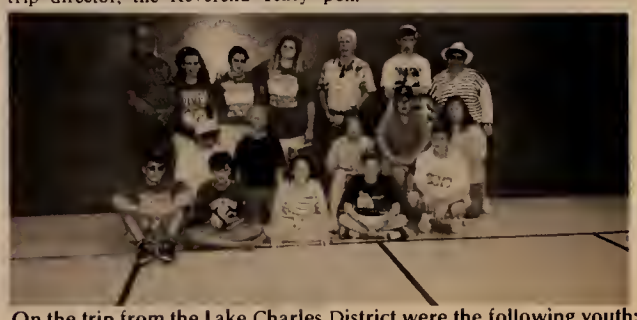
Other missioners left the state for similar tasks. Blackwater UMC youth journeyed to Tennessee in July to work with disadvantaged children while adolescents from Asbury UMC in Bossier City travelled to Arizona to work with the elderly and poor families of the Navajo Nation.

Another July project for youth was the familiar Harvest of Hope. Munholland's Senior High kids went to Mer Rouge July 16 to 21 to pick and shell field peas for the needy. They used their space time to visit shut-ins.

On a district level, the Lake Charles District Youth Mission Team under the sponsorship of the Board of Global Ministries, joined other youth to work in GAP (Gainsville Georgia Aid Project). These GAPPERS broke into work teams to aid elderly and disadvantaged persons in the North Georgia mountains. During the week of July 9-16, these energetic people painted, repaired plumbing, raked leaves, cleaned out gutters, washed windows, and did "anything for which they had the tools and people-power," according to mission trip director, the Reverend Tracy MacKenzie. The GAPPERS ended their week with a worship service for their host church (Antioch UMC).

The GAPPERS' worship experience was not unusual. Appropriately, the countless adults and young people who went in service to others during the summer months, reflected in the small number mentioned here, began and ended their journeys in worship and mission. As Asbury pastor Jerry Hilbun summed up this spirit in a letter to his congregation, their work is "a continuation of a long line of committed people that are living out their faith by responding to needs wherever they find them . . . Where the spirit of God is alive in the people of God, incredible things happen."

Youth pictured are from Lafayette UMC and were accompanied to Monroe by associate pastor the Rev. Tom Dolph. The Rev. Ira M. Robinson is the senior pastor. Youth from Alexandria were accompanied by youth leader Kirk LeJune and Wayne McConnell. The Rev. Henry Blount is senior pastor.



On the trip from the Lake Charles District were the following youth: Brandon Barnhill, Kyle Boyd, Cory Cochran, Chad Everage, Kurt Gardner, Trent Herring, Heath Johnson, Lindsay LeBert, Brock Mayeux, Heather Robinson, Alison Taylor and Amanda Thibodeaux. The adults on the trip were: the Rev. Jack Phelps, Mrs. Marilyn Peckar, Ms. Becky Rollin, Mr. Bill Herring and the Rev. Tracy MacKenzie. The trip was sponsored by the Lake Charles District Board of Global Ministries and was under the direction of the Rev. MacKenzie, pastor of the Church Point-Ville Platte-Maxie UMC charge.

Dr. Alfred L. Norris Endorsed for Bishop

Dr. Alfred L. Norris was unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed for Bishop by the Louisiana Conference delegation at its organizational meeting on Friday, September 13, 1991. The General and Jurisdictional delegates met to organize for their responsibilities in connection with the many issues to come before the General Conference (the official policy-making body of The United Methodist Church), and the South Central Jurisdictional Conference (the body designated to elect the episcopal leaders within our Jurisdiction).

Dr. Norris, a native of Louisiana and the son of a Methodist parsonage family, has been a clergy member of the Louisiana Annual Conference since 1961. He has served as local church pastor in several of the churches within Louisiana and as the District Superintendent of the New Orleans-Houma District from 1974-1980. He received his education at Dillard University and Gammon Theological Seminary. He is presently serving in his seventh year as President of Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Norris has served as chairman of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, as a member of the General Board of Publication and as an active member of many

Alfred L. Norris

of the Conference boards and agencies and community agencies. He has been chosen to be a member of the Louisiana Delegation to General and Jurisdictional conferences for the past five quadrennia.

Dr. Norris is married to the former Mackie Lyvonne Harper. The Norrises have two children, Alfred, Jr. and Angela.

In making the announcement for endorsement, Mr. Paul White, Chairperson of the Louisiana delegation, stated that "... the delegates of the Louisiana Conferences are proud to place Dr. Alfred Norris' name in consideration as a bishop of The United Methodist Church. Dr. Norris has proven himself to be an effective and visionary leader in the local, district, conference and general church. He has all the qualities necessary to be a key leader in our pursuit of ministry and mission."

Adult volunteers look at a mission trip

By KERRY TOWNSON
Youth Sponsor, Aldersgate, Slidell, LA

It was the moment the youth group of Aldersgate UMC had both anticipated and dreaded for months. The big blue van rumbling up the hilly roads of Tennessee's Natchez Trace State Park was bringing our campers for a four-day special medical needs summer camp and none of us knew quite what to expect. (see related story.)

As the van door opened the shock of seeing handicapped children froze some of us for a few seconds. But love jumped off the bus ahead of nine very special young people and surrounded us, overcoming our fears of the different and unknown. Within moments there were youth pushing wheelchairs up and down the hills, bounding through the brush outside our cabins or just sitting and getting to know one another. Youth Director Sheri Zehner said "I had never felt the Holy Spirit move more strongly than at that very moment."

It wasn't all fun and games, particularly for the wheelchair patients and our youth assigned to help them. The park had thick gravel around the cabins, steep wooden steps and six-inch doorsills that challenged our creativity and our muscles. Still, we went swimming in a lake, played in the sand, went boat riding, held a dance at the recreation lodge and made crafts galore — all the things "normal" kids would do at a summer camp.

With only a nurse present for medication we were totally responsible for children who had handicaps ranging from head trauma to various birth defects. Getting them dressed, showered and to the bathroom was a full-time commitment from wake-up to bedtime, and sometimes even during the night. Yet the love and trust we shared with our special friends made those difficulties seem trivial — just something you did for someone who needed you.

Despite all of the hard work, parting was a painful experience for both the campers and the youth group. No one left the camp unchanged. We all made special friends, learned to lean on each other through difficult times, grew in our faith and experienced the joy of giving without expecting anything in return. Before we left, our pastor (a native of Tennessee) had assured us we were traveling to "God's country." For that glorious week at least, he was right on target!

You Better Believe

Autobiographical Look at United Methodist Ministry in Louisiana

The Reverend A. Jerome Cain's nearly 48 years in Louisiana's Annual Conference has provided grist for an autobiographical look at the problems and possibilities of ministry and its impact upon the parsonage families called into it. **You Better Believe: An Autobiography**, published this year by Land and Land Printers of Baton Rouge, evolved over the years from a retrospective journal into a 345 page book.

Already in its second printing of five hundred copies, the book is an honest, personal account of a third-generation Methodist preacher who has seen the church through seventy-five years of change and consistency.

It is also a story of shared community. The love that Mr. Cain feels for the people that he and his wife served and the bonds that hold those churches together are evident in the numerous stories and vignettes described in his narrative pilgrimage. Hard times, sad times, glad times and hopeful times provide insight into relationships —

Rev. A. Jerome Cain

spiritual and otherwise — that parishioners have with their pastor and their God.

Evident, as well, is the underlying faith and trust in a good and gracious Lord who has sustained the Cains through their numerous years in ministry. As Mr. Cain says in his book, "Mine is a debt to Him, my wife, my family, the Methodist Church and to the wonderful Methodist people who have made living a wonderful experience.

You Better Believe reflects that gratitude and the generous soul of one of God's servants whose life has tried to repay that debt.

October Conference Calendar

4-5	Conference Council on Ministries Retreat for VISION 2000, Dillard University, New Orleans
5	United Methodist Women District Annual Meetings: Acadiana, Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, New Orleans and Ruston Districts
5	United Methodists in Worship, Music and the Other Arts Fall Workshop, First Church, Alexandria, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
5-6	Singles Event, Asbury Church, Lafayette
6	World Communion Sunday
9	Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Executive Committee, First Church, Alexandria, 10:00 a.m.
11-13	Jurisdictional Singles Event, Mount Sequoyah
12	Conference Board of Laity, First Church, Alexandria, 10:00 a.m.
12	United Methodist Women District Annual Meetings: Monroe and North Shore Districts
13	United Methodist Women District Annual Meeting: Shreveport District
13-14	Shepherd's Visit — Monroe District
14-16	Christian Educators Fellowship, (Regional), Norcross, GA
17-18	LACEF Fall Retreat, Tall Timbers
17-20	Cursillo No. 25, Tall Timbers
19	CCYM Meeting, First Church, Pineville, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
19	LACEF Lake Charles District Workshop, Henning Memorial Church, Sulphur, 9:30 a.m.
19-21	Shepherd's Visit — Alexandria District
20	Disability Awareness and Advocacy Sunday
20	Laity Sunday
25-27	20th National Conference District Presidents of United Methodist Men (Gen. Bd. of Discipleship), Dallas, TX
26	United Methodist Women District Elected Leaders Training, First Church, Pineville, 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
27	Good Samaritan Observance

Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital

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Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Building the Church

This week's column is written by Mr. Paul D. White, Louisiana Annual Conference Lay Leader. Mr. White is a realtor and developer. He is a member of First United Methodist Church in Alexandria.

Building is my trade. Signs in front of commercial buildings and new residences attribute to me ownership as a builder. Yet I know everyday of my life that long lists of names should go along side mine — banks which finance my operations and offer financial expertise, engineers who advise on land conditions, architects who plan economical, usable floor space, specialists, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, cabinet men, painters, secretaries and bookkeepers — the list is very long. I have the commitment and business know-how to get the work done, but I could never build the first home or office without the vital help of all those who contribute to my endeavors.

The Church is in the building business too; helping each of us build our lives witbin the will, the values and the priorities of God. As the Churcb, with God's help, we build society bit by bit, little by little, as His kingdom on earth. Each of us has unique gifts and graces, enabled through education and experience, to play our parts in building the Kingdom.

In our United Methodist Church, a high degree of authority is vested in the office of bishop and local pastors. However, bishops and pastors cannot build by themselves. They vitally need the creativity, competence and commitment of each lay member in our churches.

The solution to the ills of our beloved church is that simple and that challenging. As a member of the United Metbodist Church, have you volunteered your unique talents to make our church a more effective witness for our Lord?

With a membership of 135,000, only a few dozen offer themselves to serve in district and conference responsibilities. Decide today to send your resume and the area of responsibility in which you can serve to your District Lay Leader or your District Superintendent. That's the greatest contribution you can make to the celebration of Laity Sunday, 1991. Christ needs each one of us to volunteer for service — the strength and vitality of His Church depend on our willingness to help.

Paul D. White

Laity Sunday: A Call to Holy Living

Laity Sunday, the celebration of the ministry provided by lay persons in the Church, will be held on October 20 throughout United Methodism. Each church is asked to give enthusiastic emphasis to the "priesthood" of the non-clerical majority of believers in its midst.

This year's theme, "We are called to Holy Living," embodies both the call and commitment of Christ's claim on each life "set apart" for Christian living and service since the Scriptural command, "be ye holy" (Matt 5:48), does not distinguish between clergy or lay people, according to leaders in the Louisiana Conference.

Mr. Boyd Baun, president of the Louisiana Conference's United Methodist Men (UMM), in fact, considers the laity "the greatest part of the Conference," because of the greater numbers and hence the greater potential for service. He says that one of the major goals of the UMM currently is leadership training to enable more individuals to spread the good news of Christ to more people.

"Laity should realize," Mr. Baun continues, that the church operates "from the bottom up, not from the Bishop down." The Conference structure, he believes, provides a wonderful opportunity for "laity to get to know and work with laity" across the state in service to others.

Mrs. Norma Winegeart, president of the Louisiana Conference's United Methodist Women (UMW), agrees. "Without the local unit — the local woman — there would be no preachers, no church," she says.

Conference Lay Leader Paul White echoes these same thoughts. He sees lay participation on all church levels as vital for its survival. He says that there sbould be more "attention paid to the laity, which has been subdued in the past." He urges all lay leaders in all the churches to use Laity Sunday to highlight the past work of lay men and women and to encourage future opportunities for lay service. He himself is scheduled to preach at four different churches during the month of October.

Besides inviting lay speakers and other lay participants to take part in the Sunday worship services, some churches also use this opportunity to honor dedicated lay workers. At least one church in past years also used Laity Sunday to honor — in costume and historical voice — the great lay leaders in Church history. Lay leaders sucb as the Apostles, St. Francis of Assisi, John Calvin, Susanna Wesley, Barbara Heck and Isabella Thoburn to name a few.

Resources available to help in the celebration of Laity Sunday include the July/August issue of the **Interpreter** magazine, The Upper Room Resource Center and Discipleship Resources.

As Mr. Baun concludes, Laity Sunday is a great opportunity to become more involved in your church and its ministry.

United Methodist Pastor Honored at Retirement as Executive Director of LIC

Rev. James Stovall

The Louisiana Interchurch Conference (LIC) honored retiring head, the Reverend James Stovall, at a recognition dinner on September 16 in Baton Rouge. Mr. Stovall had been executive director of the organization since 1976.

The LIC is a state-wide coalition of Christian churches that work together to meet the social, moral and spiritual challenges of society.

A member of the Louisiana Annual Conference since 1943, Mr. Stovall served as pastor in churches in Eunice, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Metairie and Monroe before channelling a long history of social action and community involvement into the specific ministry of the Interchurch Conference. His 33 years in the local ministry were the most meaningful and satisfying, he says, because the "most basic fundamental work of ministry should be at the heart of all we do." The LIC was just another outlet for this ministry.

Under his direction, the LIC has created at least nine significant projects in its work with forty collaborative groups to meet the needs of the community. These projects have ranged from the publication of a state-wide newsletter to the building of an Interfaith Chapel at the penitentiary at Angola.

Mr. Stovall, however, is most proud of the work he has done with the Louisiana Coalition Against Racism and Nazism, now a free-standing agency, that works to combat the "spread of a cruel, mean and ugly racism and anti-semitism across the state and nation." Mr. Stovall will continue as head of this coalition, working full time as a volunteer.

The strong motivation for social activism comes from bis understanding of the Christian faith. "We cannot say that Jesus is the Messiah unless we exalt him as Lord in politics, or business or education," he says.

These values, he believes, came out of growing up in the depression as part of a large family where "we had to work together." A two-year tour of duty from 1944-46 as a US Navy Chaplain attached to the Marine Corps further strengthened his sense of community. Not surprisingly, the most satisfying aspect of his LIC work has been seeing church leaders working together "to exalt Christ in the Church and in the State." No doubt, Mr. Stovall will continue right along with them.

Lake Charles District to Host Disabilities Seminar

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!! On November 8 and 9, a Disabilities Seminar, sponsored by the Conference Committee on Meeting the Needs of Persons with Handicapping Conditions, will be held. Its purpose is to introduce and inform representatives of the local churches of ways in which their church may make itself completely accessible to persons with all types of handicaps. The Lake Charles District is hosting the seminar at University UMC at 3501 Patrick Street; (318) 477-2003.

Registration will begin at 6 p.m. Friday, November 8. Dr. Bob Pitzer of SEMAR, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina; the Reverend Kathy Reeves of the General Board of Global Ministries, New York; the Reverend LaVerle Carrington of Central Illinois Conference; Mr. Ray Fugatt of Wesley United Methodist Church, Sulphur; the Rev. Kathy Clark-Dickens, Chaplain of the Methodist Home of New Orleans; the Reverend Mickey Stringfield of Cedar Grove United Methodist Church, Shreveport; Mr. Peter Braswell of New Orleans; and the Reverend Steve Casey of Evergreen Center, Minden will present the program. The conference is blessed to have these renowned and well-informed role models and teacbers to lead the way toward total inclusiveness in the Christian Church Family.

The Committee urges eacb local church to send a representative and to fund his/her expenses. The registration fee to attend the seminar is $10.00, which includes a Continental breakfast, lunch and snacks. Sugar-free and salt-free foods will be available. There is some courtesy housing in the bomes of University United Methodist Church members. For these, please telephone Mrs. Marge Robinson at (318) 477-2003. Econo-Lodge, Prien Lake Road, Lake Charles; is convenient to University UMC. Nightly cost is $39.95 for single and $41.95 for double. The telephone number is (318) 474-5151 and the manager is Mr. Mark Rodriguez.

The Reverend Carole Cotton-Winn will end the seminar in a sending forth service at 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 9.

For Additional information, call the office of your District Superintendent or University UMC at (318) 477-2003 or (318) 255-2453 after 6 p.m.

We really need for all local churches' representatives to pre-register in order to adequately plan for meals, etc. Please complete the form and mail it no later than Nov. 5th to Mrs. Sarabeth Atkins, Rt. 3, Box 67-5, Dubach, LA 71236.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS MINISTRY!!!

Please enclose your registration fee of $10.00. Make your check payable to University United Methodist Church.

NAME _____ Local Church _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

I need ____ braille ____ signing ____ wheelchair accessibility

_____ other (specify)

St. Mark UM Church in Baton Rouge Believes Actions Speak Louder than Words

The Rev. Randall Campbell and the Rev. Kirby Verret are shown sharing a moment during St. Mark UMC's visit to the Dulac Community Center.

Left to right: Ms. Carrie Martin, Ms. Ida Phillips, Ms. Pamela Dunlap, Ms. Mary Alice Quiett, the Rev. Randall Campbell, the Rev. Kirby Verret, Ms. Mildred Bowie, Ms. Dollene Sims, Ms. Lois Heath, and Ms. Marion Griffin, are shown during the group's recent visit to Dulac Community Center.

Editor's Note: The following article was written by Mrs. Dollene Wilson Sims, a member of St. Mark United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge.

St. Mark United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge has observed Native American Awareness Sunday for several years. At each celebration, a Native American was chosen to speak to the congregation about the many aspects of his/her life. As a result of these messages, which sparked interest and concern, the Committee on Religion and Race felt the need to get first-hand information, become more involved and show signs of friendship.

A visit to the Dulac Community was one of the objectives for the 1991-92 Conference year. The visit was designed to 1) receive and understand the gifts of the Native American history, its tradition and spirituality; 2) to show the Dulac community that the St. Mark Family cares by its presence, time, talents and gifts.

Mrs. Mary Alice Quiett, Chairperson of the Committee on Religion and Race; the Reverend Randall Campbell, pastor of St. Mark; and members of the committee travelled by van to Houma. The group was greeted by the Reverend Kirby Verret and members of his congregation with warm hospitality. The group shared experiences, listened to stories and concerns, participated in the evening worship service and fellowship that included a meal prepared by the members of the Dulac Community.

St. Mark UMC is committed to strengthening its relationship with the Dulac Community by responding to their needs. Arrangements are being made to transport several members of the Dulac Community to participate in worship and fellowship at St. Mark. During this visit, the members of the church and the surrounding community will respond to the needs of the Native Americans with understanding, love, gifts, talents and spirituality. It is hoped that these kinds of experiences will lead to greater knowledge and awareness of the Native American culture within the United States.

Editorial

Heed voices of suffering

Listen to these voices of United Methodist youths:

Lela: "Most adults in churches have a tendency to say: 'Drugs are bad; alcohol is bad.' I'm not arguing against that. But it's portrayed that you are bad for doing those things."

Miranda: "I was downtown begging for money to get high and nobody would stop me."

Anthony Shawn: "There was a gun on the seat, and I knew the guy was coming to get me, so I shot at him."

Are these "bad kids?" No, they're "our kids." They are youngsters like those found in United Methodist congregations across the nation. Most of all, they are souls in torment.

We believe that these reports from the recent Pan-Methodist Youth Consultation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence (see UMR, Sept. 27) pose both an indictment and an urgent call for The United Methodist Church.

The indictment: We, as United Methodists, have failed to listen to the cries for help from the youths in our congregations and our communities. We have denied that the pains of drug and alcohol addiction and violence—physical, emotional and psychological suffering—confront every one of our congregations.

By pretending that such suffering doesn't exist in our midst, we have blinded ourselves to contemporary needs of persons not unlike those Jesus outlined as confronting faithful disciples in Matthew 25:35-46.

In effect, we have ignored, as Jesus warned we might, "the least of these," our children.

The call: As individuals, as congregations and as a denomination, we must begin to ease this suffering. We must acknowledge our own addictions and accept responsibility for helping our young people and ourselves recover from the suffering of alcohol and drug abuse and violence.

You and your congregation will need to discern the specific needs of your community in this regard. As you consider what must be done, be wary of the temptation to dismiss drug abuse and violence as "not our problem." The witness of our youths underscores the reality that people in the pews of every congregation are suffering these kinds of pain.

Whatever your particular response, however, we affirm and recommend these broad guidelines for action highlighted by consultation participants:

• Take time to tell teen-agers—and their families as well—that God loves them.

• Affirm people who are trying to stop using drugs and alcohol. Reassure each person struggling to recover that, despite their self-destructive behaviors, he or she is still a child of God.

• Take advantage of every opportunity to give youths alternatives to activities that can lead them into drug and alcohol abuse and violence. As consultation participants urged: "Give them God."

FaithLine

Readers cite favorite verses of Scripture

FaithLine recently invited readers, in connection with reviving the discipline of memorizing Bible verses, to cite Scripture that holds particular meaning for them and tell why. Here is a sampling of their responses:

Shirley M. Duling, Ashland, Ill., Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"—has been a favorite Scripture of mine for many years. We did a lot of memorizing of Bible verses in the church where I grew up and Philippians 4:13 was our "special" Sunday School Class verse.

Elizabeth Olsen, Houston: I just discovered a Bible verse today that I wrote in my journal because it had such meaning for me. It's Luke 19:40. It was Jesus' response to the Pharisees who were telling Him to rebuke his disciples for praising Him: "I tell you if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." I don't know why I like it so much but I think it's particularly reconciling with so many voices.

Linda Watson, Kearney, Neb.: I strongly believe in memory work, and have memorized 17 verses of John 15 and all of Colossians 3 and other verses. This year I John 4:4—"Greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world"—has been one that I've relied on more as I sometimes fight my feelings of failure in my work, social and relationships with my family.

James Perez, Wahiawa, Hawaii: My favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 6:8. Fifteen years ago this verse, suggested by a prayerful friend, helped me become aware of God's calling for me. I felt exactly like Isaiah did in verse 5 of being unclean and unworthy even to respond to God's call. But through His grace and mercy, this verse has come to mean for me to become born again and to be apart in my daily prayer.

Lois Griffin, New Town Square, Pa.: When I was young, my aunt gave me a plaque with Proverbs 5:6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths." I've always kept that above my bedside table and it has become a motto for my life and has helped me many times.

Law makes no substitute for morals on abortion

By EUGENE C. KENNEDY
Religious News Service

Commentary

Second in a series

For years now, the main strategy of pro-life groups has focused almost exclusively on legal means to overturn Roe vs. Wade, the case in which the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973, and to protect the lives of the unborn through passage of what is termed a Human Life Amendment to the Constitution.

Enormous energy and resources have been committed to this campaign and, to many observers, the successful reversal of Roe vs. Wade seems close at hand.

But will the deeper questions about the nature of human life, its beginnings, and our attitudes toward it thereby be resolved? Can the law, in whatever forum, be the author of spiritual and moral truths?

By betting so much on the courts for a resolution of the abortion debate, are pro-life leaders not contributing to one of the most serious and widespread distortions in our national life, the confusion of law with morality and ethics?

Fundamentally spiritual

Perhaps the question could be put in another way: Can an issue that is fundamentally spiritual be translated into the legal vocabulary in a satisfactory way? The law, extraordinary human evolutionary product that it is, is severely limited by its own definition of itself and its tactics.

Despite the romantic illusions spawned by television shows about lawyers, their calling is neither to find the truth, revere beauty, be objective, nor proclaim morality. Lawyers are trained specifically not to be objective moralists but to be fierce and unyielding advocates for their clients.

To this end, they employ adversarial tactics that are not based on fair play or trust but on disrupting and confusing the opponent. This hardly generates the atmosphere in which spiritual truth can be explored.

The law cannot, on these terms, make something moral by making it legal.

The Roe vs. Wade decision made abortion legal; it settled none of the moral or ethical aspects of the question. Overturning this decision will result only in turning the regulation of abortions back to individual states. It will not say anything about the moral dimensions of abortion itself.

The Supreme Court is charged, ordinarily within the narrow limits of a specific case, to decide only on the constitutionality of a law. Americans have, however, invested the court with a moral grandeur and authority that go beyond anything that the court can deliver. As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes replied when criticized for seeming to ignore the moral implications of an issue, "We do law here, not justice."

We rely on courts

We have come to rely on the courts and lawyers largely because of the declining authority of other societal institutions, including the church, the academy, and the government.

We expect that lawyers and their devices can splint together the broken character of our common life. Thus judges and lawyers have come to supervise vast areas of business and the other professions and to fashion and implement social policy.

Americans are oppressed by the adversarial character that an excess of lawyers and law has introduced into their lives.

Despite lawyers, ordinary people cannot live, do business, or marry for that matter, on a strictly contractual basis. There is more to being a neighbor, a customer, a spouse, or a citizen than any lawyer can ever imagine or imprison in a thousand finely drawn clauses.

Inability to speak

What the current abortion debate reveals is the inability of the great institutions, especially the churches, to speak spiritually about human life.

When, if I may ask without seeming adversarial, was the last time you heard a bishop speak comfortably or knowingly about a spiritual matter? Pious, maybe. Spiritual, no.

Lacking confidence in their own vocabulary, or having become estranged from it, these persons, called to be spiritual leaders, have committed perhaps the most significant spiritual problem of the age, that of human life, to the lawyers and the law. They do not seem to understand *that* the courts cannot and will not be able to substitute for them in this great moral discourse.

Dr. Kennedy is a writer and professor of psychology at Loyola University in Chicago.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendant power belongs to God and not to us."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Philippians 4:19)

Readings for week of Oct. 7

Monday: Psalms 128
Tuesday: Genesis 2: 18-20
Wednesday: Genesis 2: 21-24
Thursday: Mark 10:2-12
Friday: Mark 10:13-16
Saturday: Hebrews 1:1-4
Sunday: Hebrews 2:9-11

Letters to the Editor

Why shouldn't we hold seminaries accountable?

I am surprised that Rod Saunders so easily dismisses Good News' concern about UM seminaries being faithful to UM doctrine and instead questions Good News' faithfulness (see UMR, Sept. 20).

For Mr. Saunders, it appears that to be "faithful" means to be official or "provided for" in the Discipline. Actually, none of the 11 or so UM caucuses are in the Discipline, nor is the Joint Panel on Interagency Concerns, nor the National Association of UM Evangelists, nor . . . well, you get the point.

The Ministerial Education Fund has a whopping budget of between $75 million and $80 million in 1989-92. Much of this amount goes to underwrite our seminaries. Surely it's not unreasonable to ask if we're getting our money's worth?

Finally, Mr. Saunders offers Good News two options; (1) leave or (2) stay in and shut up—that is, live with "pluralism." (Note he then goes on to talk about "tolerance".)

We in Good News, of which I am the executive director, prefer a third option, to stay in and keep urging the church to require fidelity from its seminaries. They are stewards of a trust and it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

James V. Heidinger II
Wilmore, Kentucky

Don't blame cops

I agree with all the points made by Robert Underwood in his letter about "anger and blame in Milwaukee" (see UMR, Aug. 30) until he makes the unfortunate generalization: "The Dahmer story is just one example of police indifference to their duties that exists across America." I must strongly disagree.

My younger sister is an officer for a major city in the northwest United States.

She and her co-workers face each day a job in which they are "outgunned" by 14-year-old kids with street weapons. They are not treated with respect or support by the general public, and they have little backup support to call upon in times of extreme stress (such as the extreme close media scrutiny given all of their actions).

My sister loves her job most of the time, but how many of us could continue to be attracted to a job description like that?

I fear for the future of law enforcement in our country if we do not begin to view our law enforcement officials objectively, and give the vast majority the support and respect which they so richly deserve while supporting their efforts to clean house of the "bad apples" that no doubt exist in every department.

Gail Trenhaile
McCook, Nebraska

Faithfully yours

Paying tribute to the vision of an old man's dream

One of the most significant phone calls I ever made—exactly four years ago this weekend—began as a practical joke.

I was in Maryland, 'way over on the eastern shore the other side of Chesapeake Bay, where I had just helped lead the first out-of-town workshop sponsored by the new United Methodist Reporter Institute for Church Communications.

Things had gone so well that I decided to call Jim Verhoeff in Little Rock, Ark., and tell him about it. His gift of $10,000 earlier that year had allowed us to create the UMR Institute to train United Methodists to do two things that this old newspaperman from Arkansas thought were terribly important—put out a better church newsletter and get more church news into daily papers.

"Hello, Jim," I said. "This is John Lovelace."

"Why hello, John," came the cheery, crackly voice. "Where are you and what are you up to?"

"Well, Jim," I said, teasing him, "I'm a long way from home and I'm homesick and I'm working hard spending some of your money leading one of these workshops clear over here in Maryland. You ever been to Maryland?"

Benefactor James L. Verhoeff (center) joined with Managing Editor John A. Lovelace (left) and Editor and Chief Executive Spurgeon M. Dunnam III to announce the creation of the UMR Institute for Church Communications in 1987. Mr. Verhoeff died Sept. 19 at age 89.

"Can't say that I have, but would it make you feel any better if I gave you a thousand shares of Southwestern Bell Telephone stock?"

I gulped, aware right away that while I might have been having a little fun, he was dead serious.

"I feel better already, Jim," I said. "We'll be talking with you."

Two weeks later, in his modest home in Little Rock, Jim Verhoeff gave the UMR Institute for Church Communications not 1,000 shares of Southwestern Bell but 3,000 (it had split a time or two and he hadn't paid that much attention).

That gift of stock and a second, smaller gift of another stock became the financial underpinning of two significant projects: a permanent home for the UMR Institute within the proposed UMR Communications Center and the beginning of a permanent endowment for a program which in four years has conducted face-to-face communications training with more than 2,000 people.

Jim died Sept. 19 at age 89. He leaves a sister, nieces and nephews and their children as direct survivors, but he also leaves an entire church in his debt. The latter statement is true because his dedication to telling the Good News had led him in 1988 to designate the UMR Institute for Church Communications as the primary beneficiary of his estate.

The prophet Joel helped prepare us for people like James Lester Verhoeff when he spoke of old men dreaming dreams.

The prophet also spoke of young men having visions—of people, perhaps, like this newspaper's editor and chief executive, the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, whose entrepreneurial vision provided the initiative to link up with Jim Verhoeff's dream to create, nourish and underwrite a communications training vehicle with unlimited potential.

Nothing in my four decades in this profession tops the satisfaction I feel in helping make one old man's dream come to life.

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

What others are saying

"One of the tragedies of a hostile world is that we think we are forced to meet fear with fear, power with power, strength with strength. We are quick to arm for war, but we neglect the tasks of peace. That is not God's way!"

—Bishop Ben Oliphint (Houston Area)

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

BOESAK BACKS SANCTIONS: Sanctions that are still intact against South Africa should not be lifted until two conditions are met, according to **Allan Boesak,** an internationally known South African anti-apartheid activist. Those conditions, he said recently at a Concordia College symposium, are that South Africa begin transition to a non-racial interim government and that representatives be elected to discuss drafting a new democratic constitution for South Africa.

Allan Boesak

CHOLERA DOWNPLAYED?: Two Roman Catholic bishops have charged the Guatemalan government with trying to minimize and conceal the number of deaths in the country due to cholera in order to protect lucrative export and tourism industries. "The government is speculating and is denying the truth," said Bishop **Alvaro Ramazzini** of San Marcos, 120 miles west of the capital. He and Bishop **Fernando Gamalero** of Escuintla said more than 1,000 people have been affected by cholera, a bacteria-borne illness that spreads where there is unsafe water and poor sanitation. At least 15 people have died of cholera nationwide, and in San Marcos alone eight people have died and 328 people have become severely ill due to cholera, they alleged.

ACLU BLAST: The Supreme Court "is literally turning back the clock on constitutional law and philosophy," particularly in the area of religious liberty, according to **Nadine Strossen,** president of the American Civil Liberties Union. Addressing the 44th national conference of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Ms. Strossen declared that "we can no longer depend on the federal court system to protect our religious liberties guaranteed by the First Amendment." She cited as an example the 1990 case of Oregon v. Smith, denying use of peyote in Native American religious ceremonies. She contends that the ruling meant that the Supreme Court has dramatically narrowed the scope of the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.

Compiled from news and staff reports

New life for the church in Russia

199 baptized in Ekaterinburg; 20-acre 'Methodist Park' site consecrated

By SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III
Reporter Editor

EKATERINBURG, Russia—The scenario would readily qualify for Ripley's "Believe It or Not." Biblical writers would describe it as a miracle that could result only from an outpouring of God's Spirit.

Fourteen months ago, a United Methodist pastor from Shreveport, La., the Rev. Dwight Ramsey, visited this formerly closed city as part of a cultural exchange program. But he also had another hope: to establish a local church.

Mr. Ramsey met and visited some Christian believers who expressed an interest in establishing a congregation. Armed with a petition signed by 20 Russian citizens, he appeared before the City Council and requested that 10 acres of a city park be given for that purpose. Their response was surprisingly positive.

Since then, Mr. Ramsey and members of his Broadmoor United Methodist congregation in Shreveport have stayed in regular contact with their would-be counterparts in Ekaterinburg—by weekly facsimile messages and by videotapes of Mr. Ramsey's sermons (see UMR, June 21).

An historic service

Last week, an 18-member delegation organized by Mr. Ramsey and headed by Bishop William Oden of Baton Route, La., endured a 25-hour delay in a crowded Moscow airport en route to a special service of consecration in Ekaterinburg.

Bedraggled but undaunted, the group landed just before the service was to begin and went straight to the 20-acre site given by the City Council for the new church in newly renamed "Methodist Park."

The group was welcomed by Mayor Yuri Samarin and some 400 local citizens, many of whom had waited up all night for their arrival.

Bishop Oden told the outdoor gathering that Methodist congregations are found in more than 60 nations around the globe but that they were part of an historic occasion. Ekaterinburg—until recently known as Sverdlovsk—is the first United Methodist congregation for the Russian people.

Three invitations

In a sermon translated into Russian by an interpreter, Bishop Hans Vaxby of Finland, whose Northern European United Methodist area could include the Soviet Union, issued "three invitations" to those in attendance: (1) to say "yes" to your longing for God; (2) to get to know God personally through Jesus Christ as He is revealed through Scripture; and (3) to become co-workers with God in building up the church.

During the next 72 hours, the two bishops and others in the Shreveport delegation learned just how vigilant their Russian hosts had been and how ready they were to respond.

Dramatic responses

✓ Some 500 people attended each of two special worship services in the local Philharmonic Hall. These were the first times that more than 150 of the congregation were able to meet together at one time because of space limitations.

✓ 199 adults, youths and children came forward to receive Christian baptism and membership in the United Methodist Church. Each new Christian was given either a Russian Bible or a pictorial New Testament with Russian captions. Bishop Oden said that nothing in his experience could compare with the religious intensity of more than 100 people eagerly waiting to be baptized. The fledgling congregation now numbers some 600 members.

✓ Mrs. Lidia Estomina, a former college administrator nurtured by Mr. Ramsey to lead the congregation, was recognized by Bishops Vaxby and Oden as a lay pastor and formally appointed to serve in that capacity, with Mr. Ramsey assigned to continue as her supervising elder.

✓ A 6-member administrative council of lay leaders was organized to consult with and assist Ms. Estomina in developing the new congregation.

✓ Typical of Methodists worldwide, the new congregation already is engaged in community outreach. It has become involved in sponsoring a pre-school class and a school for hearing-impaired children. Plans are underway to establish a clinic and a food distribution ministry focused especially on the needs of children and the large number of retired persons whose state pensions total only $2.10 per month. Persons with medical and educational expertise in the Shreveport group have promised to help as needed with training and supplies.

✓ Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Estomina, the two bishops and other church leaders urgently petitioned Mayor Samarin and the City Council to provide an existing building for use by the congregation and its outreach ministries until funds can be raised to erect a building in "Methodist Park."

Why would the Mayor and City Council of a city of 1.5 million people go to such lengths to help establish a new church?

Mayor Samarin said that Russians have learned the hard way that civilized people need choices. While affirming the continuing important role of the Russian Orthodox Church, he said that Methodism with its tolerance for other religions and concern for the whole person "offers a responsible choice."

In affirming the new church, another member of the city council said, "I am not a believer, but when I meet people like you who are so sincere in your desire to help, I almost want to believe in God."

Still another city council member said: "The previous speaker did not entirely speak the truth in saying she is not a believer. We all believed in communism and it failed us." Although indicating that his daughter was baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church two months ago, he said, he, too, believed people should have more than one alternative to atheism.

Mr. Ramsey, continuing a theme he has sounded many times, said: "We do not claim to know all there is to know about God. But what we do know has changed our lives and filled us with meaning and purpose. And so we come to share our faith with you."

As the group was preparing to leave, Mayor Samarin assured them of the City Council's awareness of the church's urgent need for a temporary building.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTOS BY SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

EKATERINBURG, Russia—United Methodist bishops William Oden of Louisiana, center, and Hans Vaxby of Finland, right, baptize a teenage boy—one of 199 children and adults to receive Christian baptism last week during the visit of a 20-member group organized by the pastor of the Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La., the Rev. Dwight Ramsey. At left, Mrs. Lidia Estomina, who was recognized as a lay pastor and assigned to lead the Ekaterinburg congregation, assists in the baptismal service.

EKATERINBURG, Russia—United Methodist missionary to Russia, Chris Hena is surrounded by people with questions about the new United Methodist local church that will be built on a 20-acre site provided by the City Council. Some 400 local members joined in an outdoor consecration service for the land with an 18-member group from their sponsoring congregation—Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La.

Is the Ekaterinburg congregation a phenomenon or a repeatable model?

How was it possible to establish a United Methodist congregation with government help in a land with no Methodist roots, one that, until recently, was officially atheistic?

The Rev. Dwight Ramsey, pastor of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport., La., followed several identifiable steps:

(1) **A reason for being there.** In his case, the original reason was a cultural exchange program involving his two teenage daughters.

(2) **Clarity about one's agenda.** Mr. Ramsey brought a passionate desire to proclaim God's reality and concern for the whole person to a people whose social values and social structures were crumbling.

(3) **Intentional seeking out of people who are receptive to the Gospel.** Good intentions alone are not enough. Opportunities must be found to exercise them.

4) **Present Christianity in the United Methodist tradition as a responsible choice.** It is "responsible" because it presents a faith to live by while remaining tolerant of other religious groups and even of those who choose not to believe.

Dwight Ramsey

(5) **Identify, cultivate and empower local leadership.** No amount of support from abroad can result in a strong local congregation without strong local leadership.

(6) **Need for unqualified support of mission church by pastor and lay leadership of a sponsoring local congregation in the U.S.** The relationship needs to reflect a spirit of partnership.

(7) **Establish connection between the new local church and wider circle of the Methodist family worldwide.**

Is the emergence of the Ekaterinburg United Methodist Church an isolated, coincidental phenomenon, or might similar methods produce similar results in other situations?

"I think they can," Mr. Ramsey said, "though it's not easy on either a pastor or a congregation to undertake such a commitment. But I think it's worth all that we've put into it.

"As much as the Russian people need what we have to offer, our congregations need equally to experience the kind of renewal that comes from carrying out the Great Commission," Mr. Ramsey said.

—SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

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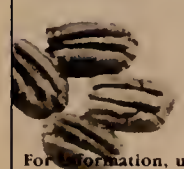

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UMs reach out to Soviets on variety of fronts

As the Shreveport/Ekaterinburg partnership develops on a congregational level, United Methodists also are reaching out to the Soviet Union on a variety of other fronts.

In early 1991, Bishop J. Woodrow Hearn and the Rev. Randolph Nugent, leaders of the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries, returned from a visit to Moscow with reports of a vast spiritual vacuum in the Soviet Union. They challenged the board at its spring meeting to respondthat need.

During the summer, followup meetings resulted in a coordinated series of agreements involving the mission board, the General Board of Discipleship, the United Methodist Publishing House, United Methodist Communications, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Peace Fund.

Provide channel for aid

Those agreements are designed in part to provide a dependable channel for humanitarian outreach by United Methodists to people in the U.S.S.R.

At the same time, they are intended to assist the Russian Orthodox Church in re-establishing a credible role in Russian society following 70 years of Communist domination and intimidation.

Areas of special need identified by Orthodox leaders include training of seminarians, establishment of Sunday Schools, gaining access to publishing facilities, and developing skills in the use of radio and television.

Moscow mission presence

The Board of Global Ministries also has stationed a Russian-speaking missionary, Chris Hena, in the Moscow area to provide a United Methodist presence.

While anxious to respond to new outreach opportunities in the Soviet Union, leaders of both the mission board and the Council of Bishops have expressed concern that those new opportunities not be undertaken at the expense of ongoing United Methodist work in Estonia and other Eastern European countries that have suffered for decades under Soviet domination.

Local/global interface

The Shreveport group's visit to Moscow, Ekaterinburg and St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad) provided several opportunities for interfacing local church and general church concerns.

Inclusion of Bishop William Oden of Louisiana and Bishop Hans Vaxby in the visit provided direct involvement by the church's Council of Bishops—those charged with general oversight of the church's spiritual and temporal affairs.

The Board of Global Ministries asked one of its elected directors, the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, to represent the board's World Division and the United Methodist Committee on Relief on the journey. Dr. Dunnam likewise was included in the group in his role as Editor of the United Methodist Reporter.

Contact was made with Chris Hena in Moscow, and she accompanied the Shreveport group to Ekaterinburg.

Bishops Oden and Vaxby and Dr. Dunnam met with Father Ioann, a leader in the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church. Those three were joined by the Rev. Dwight Ramsey, Ms. Hena and Lidia Estomina in a visit with the Archbishop Melkhisedek of Ekaterinburg. In both cases, working relationships between the Russian Orthodox and United Methodist churches were reaffirmed.

Computer put to work

Mr. Ramsey and the Shreveport group brought a computer, a large number of medical supplies and clothing to be distributed to persons in need by the new church.

Before the Shreveport group's departure, Ms. Estomina's daughter had recorded on the computer the 199 names and addresses of persons baptized during the visit.

Bishop Oden brought a $600 contribution from the Louisiana Annual Conference for the church in Ekaterinburg and a like amount for the church in Estonia.

Dr. Dunnam brought a set of paraments for the new congregation's worship and a desktop copying machine from the mission board's World Division. He also made available a $3,000 grant from the United Methodist Committee on Relief to assist the new congregation in establishing a food distribution center and medical clinic for children and elderly persons who are unable to survive on their meager pensions.

Faith connections

BENEFACTOR DIES: James L. Verhoeff, 89, whose initiative led to creation of and permanent funding for the United Methodist Reporter Institute for Church Communications in 1987, died Sept. 19 in Fayetteville, Ark. Mr. Verhoeff was a newspaper reporter, editor, co-owner and municipal court reporter from 1923 until his retirement. Before helping establish the UMR Institute he had underwritten costs of a religious communications course at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology. He was an active member of Winfield United Methodist Church in Little Rock. Graveside services were held in Little Rock Sept. 21 (see related article on Page 2).

CORRECTION: United Methodist-related Emory and Henry College in Emory, Va., was No. 57 on "Money" magazine's recently published list of 100 "best-buys" in higher education. The Reporter regrets omitting Emory and Henry from an earlier listing of seven other United Methodist-related schools cited by the magazine.

PROJECT FUND: Efforts of a North Carolina United Methodist pastor to send Russian-language theological books and Bibles to Soviet Georgia have been endorsed by the church's General Board of Global Ministries. The project initiated by the Rev. **Randall Cirksena Jr.** of Rowland, N.C., has been designated **Advance Special No. 115384**, "Georgian Orthodox Seminary Theological Books and Bibles." Contributions for the project may be sent via annual conference treasurers.

LILLY GRANT: United Methodist-related Perkins School of Theology will use an $81,000 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help expand its Hispanic education, training and research programs. "Perkins' distinctive commitment to the needs of Hispanic Americans places it in an ideal position to lead theological schools in preparing religious leaders for expanding etbnic pluralism in American culture," said Dr. **Craig Dykstra**, Lilly's vice president for religion.

PREACHING AS ART: "Preaching as a Christian Art" will be the theme of the second annual Schooler Institute on Preaching Nov. 11-13 at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio. Keynote speaker will be the Rev. **Fred Craddock**, noted Presbyterian preaching authority and professor at United Methodist-related Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlana.

Search for peace unites two UM clergy

Former Cambodian Buddhist monk, New Yorker seek solutions in Asian land

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

The two United Methodist clergymen could hardly be less alike physically.

Tall and lean, the Rev. Ronald Tompkins of Caughdenoy, N.Y., towers over the Rev. Pa Nous Pan of Dallas, who has tbe compact physique typical of Southeast Asians.

But the two men have been of one heart and mind for some time in their urge to assess Christian outreach in a war-torn land—Cambodia.

They visited Cambodia in early August, accompanied by Mr. Tompkins' wife, Phyllis, a social worker, and her 15-year-old nephew, Damon Neely.

Early this year, United Methodist mission executives had put the two men in touch with each otber based on their mutual interests in Cambodia. They met in person for the first time in July at the 16th World Methodist Conference in Singapore. They went from there to Cambodia.

Their trip was arranged by Church World Service and Witness, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., which is supported in part by United Methodists. Each arranged for his own expenses.

For Mr. and Mrs. Tompkins, the trip fulfilled their hope to visit the homeland of their two refugee foster sons.

For Mr. Pan, the trip meant a return to the native land from whose "killing fields" he barely escaped in 1975.

Along with their hopes, the four took two large suitcases and three boxes of medical supplies for mission projects they visited from northwest through southeast Cambodia.

Although they traveled together, their experiences were different.

At left, the Rev. Ronald Tompkins of Caughdenoy, N.Y., his wife, Phyllis, and her 15-year-old nephew, Damon Neely, see church-related relief work in Cambodia. Right is the Rev. Pa Nous Pan of Dallas, who visited his homeland along with the New Yorkers.

Ronald Tompkins' story

In Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, the Tompkinses found the family of one of their foster sons.

"Every day they sent someone in the family to guide us," said the pastor of Caughdenoy United Methodist Church. "We quickly felt like we had real friends, and it smoothed out the strange and the difficult."

Mr. Tompkins noted that only the visitors' connection with Church World Service gained them movement outside Phnom Penh.

"We needed permission from the foreign ministry to move anywhere outside the capital," he explained. "And we had to use Church World Service vehicles with flags on them so no one would take a potshot at us."

Church World Service, he added, is one of around 50 relief agencies that has garnered respect of the various factions in Cambodia's turbulent politics.

In Cambodia this year Church World Service is administering $50,000 provided by the United Methodist Committee on Relief. **Advance Special No. 205445-7** for "Cambodian Emergency" helps fund rehabilitation programs including rebuilding of irrigation systems, veterinary medicine and seed propagation.

Mr. Tompkins said many parts of Cambodia lack clean water. In a mountainous area where equipment cannot reach, a Christian missionary has committed himself to completing a water well that must be dug by hand.

"He has tried to build it twice, and both times it failed," Mr. Tompkins said. "But he's committed to staying there a year and trying different ways until he succeeds."

"We saw many Christians from other countries in Cambodia, testifying to a greater love than that shown by our government," Mr. Tompkins said, citing the continued U.S. embargo against trade with Cambodia.

"Even so, we're not there in the way we should be, [when you consider that] 25 percent of the land was bombed by U.S. warplanes [during the Vietnam War]."

Despite deprivations caused by years of war, "Cambodians live lives of dignity and worth," he said.

"People are doing things in mission [in Cambodia] that only those with spiritual faith could do," Mr. Tompkins affirmed.

Pa Pan's story

For the Rev. Pa Nous Pan, "going home" to Cambodia was both more and less than he expected.

He was a young Buddhist monk in 1975 when the communist Khmer Rouge targeted him for assassination because the Khmer Rouge sought to eradicate all educated people who could reason against their propaganda.

After his escape to Thailand, he converted to Christianity in a refugee camp. His emigration to the United States was sponsored by Asbury United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas.

Two years ago, he became the first native Cambodian to be ordained as a United Methodist minister. Now he directs Asian ministries for the East Dallas Cooperative Parish, a coalition of six inner-city congregations.

His first impression upon returning to Phnom Penh was that it was cleaner than he remembered. Nonetheless, the city was hampered by power blackouts and water cutoffs two or three times daily, he said.

Like Mr. Tompkins, Mr. Pan was encouraged by the Church World Service mission projects but disturbed by the great needs he saw in Cambodia.

"Housing is a very great problem," Mr. Pan told the Reporter. "Two or three families live in a small, poor and dirty space. Sometimes they lower a ceiling so they can build a second floor on top.

"This year, Church World Service bought 80 bicycles and three motor vehicles [for projects in Cambodia]," he said. "For one clinic they bought a solar-powered refrigerator. They bought 27 cows and three water buffalos."

In addition to visiting Church World Service projects with his companions, Mr. Pan was invited to preach at a Christian "house church."

Attendance was so large—Mr. Pan estimated at least 300 people—that people were turned away because there was no room for them to sit, he said. At the conclusion of worship, 20 people came forward to be baptized.

More poignant than his welcome at the house church was Mr. Pan's three-hour meeting with his mother, whom he had not seen since he left 16 years ago.

His mother left her Khmer Rouge-controlled town to be with Mr. Pan at a refugee camp just inside the Thai border.

What was the reaction of relatives and friends he had left behind in 1975?

"People seemed respectful to me, but some relatives and friends were afraid I would convert them," he said. "Also the way I act, speak, eat and drink is not the way I was before."

"I explained that when I became a Christian, I learned to respect God in all the nations in the world."

Publishing House describes 1990-91 as 'off year'

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—High start-up costs for a new distribution center, an expensive reorganization of staff, and the write-off of an unsuccessful video line contributed to an "off year" for The United Methodist Publishing House during 1990-91.

Robert K. Feaster, president and publisher, told governing board members meeting Sept. 24-25 that all figures related to sales and revenue were "worse than budgeted" for the fiscal year that ended July 31.

However, be described the year as "significant ... in our future planning, for I believe we have come to the close of a phase."

Board members approved a 1991-92 budget of $95 million in total revenue; $2.7 million in net operating revenue; and $3.2 million in net revenue. Increases, Mr. Feaster said, will result from tbe introduction of new resources.

The publishing house had 1990-91 sales of $86.1 million, down almost $12 million from the previous year; a negative net operating revenue of $524,000, down $10.6 million; and a positive total net revenue of $538,614, down $13.8 million.

Several factors contributed to the anticipated declines in 1990-91, according to treasurer Larry Wallace, including high sales in previous years of the new United Methodist Hymnal and the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Another factor contributing to the negative financial picture for the year was the $723,000 cost of writing off inventory of a line of video resources. Mr. Feaster explained that sales of "stand-alone" videos unrelated to print resources were "overestimated."

Not all financial news was negative. Mr. Feaster reported:

* Over-budget sales of more than $30 million at 40 Cokesbury book stores, representing a net operating revenue of $292,000;

* An increase of 6 percent in book sales, with substantial increases in professional and academic lines;

* Nearly $2 million in sales of United Metbodist Information System (UMIS) computer units for local churches representing an increase of 5 percent over the previous year and greater penetration of the non-United Methodist market;

* Enthusiastic response to the "Disciple" Bible study program introduced in 1987.

Reorganization at the publishing house, which has about 1,000 part- and full-time employees nationwide (730 in Nashville), has been expensive but Mr. Feaster said customer service has improved in both the Distribution Center and in telephone services. Despite personnel shifts, he said the percentage of racial and ethnic persons increased to 24 percent.

In addition to costs at the new Distribution Center in MetroCenter north of downtown Nashville, the publishing house spent more than $5.7 million renovating and updating headquarters facilities and equipment in downtown Nashville.

The publishing house, one of the largest religious organizations of its type in the world, is completely self-supporting, receiving no general funding from the denomination.

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'Circuit Rider' riding into sunset?

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—The familiar circuit rider—symbol of The United Methodist Publishing House for about 70 years—may be riding off into the sunset.

His possible replacement, a logo that resembles a dove, received mixed response when unveiled here Sept. 24 before the 50-member governing board of the publishing house.

Richard Listenberger, president of an Indianapolis design firm, said an effort was made to find a more contemporary symbol.

"So many young people today don't even know what a circuit rider is," he said. "Now is the time for a change."

Mr. Listenberger said he and executive staff members at the publishing house were trying to find a logo that would be recognized by church members and the general public alike.

President and Publisher Robert K. Feaster of Nashville said the word "Cokesbury" and the symbol would be used to represent both the 40 retail book stores as well as the entire publishing house organization.

The circuit rider represents the first method by which printed religious resources were distributed across the U.S. frontier. The logo is believed to have been used first by the publishing house of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in the 1920s.

Board members were asked to give their responses to the proposed "dove" logo to the president and publisher. They will vote on the proposal at their March 1992 meeting, said board chairwoman Anita Burrous of Peru, Ind.

Puerto Rico church hopes for autonomy

United Methodist News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—A 50-year, step-by-step process whereby Methodism in Puerto Rico would become an autonomous body affiliated with the United Methodist Church could reach its conclusion next May in Louisville, Ky.

Creation of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico will be before the 998 voting delegates to the United Methodist General Conference in session May 5-15. Discussions between Puerto Rico church officials and agencies of the United Methodist Church to clear the way for such a step are expected to be completed by late autumn.

At present, the approximately 9,500 United Methodists on this island commonwealth make up the Puerto Rico Annual Conference, part of the New York Area in the Northeastern Jurisdiction. If autonomy becomes a reality, it will be the first step of its kind by an individual annual conference in the United Methodist Church.

"Autonomy—an indigenous church—is very important for us," the Rev. Victor L. Bonillo, district superintendent of the conference, told the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race meeting Sept. 19-23 in San Juan. "It is important to have our own (church law) in accordance with our needs."

Becoming an affiliated autonomous church is "not an act of separation, but rather an inevitable step in the evolution of the church," the commission was told.

Mr. Bonillo said that while efforts toward autonomy began in 1971, they have accelerated in the past six years.

The projected timetable calls for autonomy to begin Jan. 1, 1993. An eight-year transition period would precede the church's becoming self-supporting.

"ABANDONED AT BIRTH"

CHI HYUN is from Korea, and was abandoned when he was born. He was taken into a Christian rehabilitation center, and since he has no one to help him, Chi Hyun was offered to **World's Children, Inc.** for sponsorship. **WCI** is a Christian organization, founded by a Methodist minister and his wife.

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LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

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William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
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Fallout from 'The Gathering'

This week's column is written by the Reverend George A. Duerson, New Orleans District Superintendent.

In my opinion, the most significant experience associated with "The Gathering" in Baton Rouge was the requirement that each congregation prepare for that event by writing a Vision Statement, a Mission Statement and some goals for 1991. I've discovered that the effort involved in that task has generated some valuable results.

For one thing, many congregations for the first time grappled with the need to become more self-conscious about the purpose of the church in general and of their church in particular. No organization can function effectively without a clearly defined vision and mission. As the statements are examined and refined each year, a congregation will experience a new sense of direction and a new hope for the future.

As important as the vision and mission statements are in giving direction, they are incomplete without concrete goals for implementation. Growth in an individual and growth in a church is impossible without the discipline of goal-setting. The individual who is in the process of realizing his/her potential as a human being is a person who is continually setting goals which promote self-improvement. As each goal is met, the person can then move on to further goals. Life becomes an exciting journey that never ends.

The same is true in the life of a church. Growth in a church whether in outreach or congregational care depends on the setting of goals which keep us moving in the direction God's Spirit is calling us to go. But in order to be effective our goals must meet the SMAC test. A goal needs to be Specific. A goal to win the world for Jesus Christ is too general. So, in the second place, a goal needs to be Measurable. There must be some way of knowing whether or not the goal has been met. Thirdly, a goal needs to be Attainable. You will always be discouraged if you continually set goals beyond your capacity to reach. But you will be bored if the goal is not challenging enough to demand your very best efforts. Finally, a goal needs to be Consistent with the Gospel. A legitimate goal for the church is always an outgrowth of seeking to be faithful disciples.

Charge Conferences can be momentous occasions when the goals met in the past year can be celebrated, and when the goals set for the coming year can send us out with a vitalizing sense of mission.

George A. Duerson

Soviet Union Visitation: First Reflections

By BISHOP WILLIAM B. ODEN

I write these thoughts over the Atlantic as we head home. It is Thursday afternoon, October 2. Marilyn and I have been transformed by a fifteen-day journey that took us across the Soviet Union as I represented the Council of Bishops on a global visitation to the former U.S.S.R. Accompanying us on the trip were the Rev. Dwight Ramsey and several members of the Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, and Dr. Spurgeon Dunnam, Editor of the **United Methodist Reporter**, representing the General Board of Global Ministries.

The trip was in four parts and each part was separate and distinctive.

Moscow: We arrived in Moscow on Wednesday, September 18. It was a blustery over-cast day which I associate with Moscow weather. While there, Dr. Dunnam and I met with leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church representing Patriarch Alexius II. We also made contact with Ms. Chris Hena, United Methodist missionary assigned to be our denomination's "presence" in Moscow. Along with Chris and Dwight Ramsey, Dr. Dunnam and I also met with leaders of the Soviet Peace Fund. The Russian Orthodox Church, the Soviet Peace Fund, and The United Methodist Church began a partnership of mutual assistance and social services in the Soviet Union negotiated last January by Bishop Woodrow Hearn, President, and Dr. Randolph Nugent, Executive Secretary, of the General Board of Global Ministries. The purpose of these meetings was to update the Council of Bishops and the General Board of Global Ministries on that embryonic partnership and how it is progressing. While in Moscow, we also met with the **Charge d'affaires** (second-in-command) of the American Embassy in order to better understand what is happening in the fast fragmenting Soviet Union.

Yekaterinburg (formerly Sverdlovsk): This part of the trip is almost indescribable. After spending 25 hours in a crowded Moscow airport, we finally boarded a Soviet plane and arrived Sunday noon just in time for the public celebration of the gift of land from the City Council to the United Methodist Church. This land consists of 20 acres in the heart of a beautiful city park. Around 600 persons attended this service at which the mayor spoke. Bishop Hans Vaxby of Northern Europe preached, and I led a service of consecration of the land upon which the new United Methodist Church will be built. Mr. Ramsey and Dr. Dunnam also participated. This congregation, founded by Mr. Ramsey, is the first United Methodist congregation on Russian soil since the Communist Revolution three-quarters-of-a-century ago.

This event began three days of special services during which 62 children and 133 adults were baptized. Bishop Vaxby and I commissioned Lydia Istomina (who was a guest of the Louisiana Annual Conference in June) as local pastor of the new church. These Yekaterinburg Methodists are remarkable people, and through Rev. Ramsey's leadership and the work of Pastor Istomina, United Methodism is firmly planted in this Russian city of a million-and-a-half people.

On Monday, September 23 we met with the City Council. During our time together, Mayor Yuri Samarin announced that even as we were meeting, the Soviet Parliament was voting to change the name of the city from Sverdlosvk back to its pre-Communist name — Yekaterinburg. On Tuesday, September 24, Bishop Vaxby, Dr. Dunnam, Pastor Istomina, Mr. Ramsey and I had a most hospitable meeting with Archbishop Melchizedek, Metropolitan of Yekaterinburg. During the meeting, this Russian Orthodox leader gave his blessing to Methodist work in his city. It was a very special moment for us all.

While in Yekaterinburg we also had sessions with doctors and staff of the medical institute and with numerous education officials. The Yekaterinburg Methodists touched our lives with their love and generosity and commitment, brightening the flame of United Methodism. Many friendships were cemented that will last a lifetime.

St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad): During three days in St. Petersburg, we were able to trace back Methodist work and locate the buildings that were confiscated by the state following the Communist Revolution of 1917. With the help of Pastor Lydia Istomina and her daughter Julia, contacts were made at the Museum of the Science of Religion in St. Petersburg. We were able to visit the four buildings and found two of them in remarkable condition. As Russia is in the process of returning church property to original owners, there is a possibility that Methodism can retrieve back these buildings and resume its work in St. Petersburg.

United Methodist Reporter photo by Spurgeon M. Dunnam III

EKATERINBURG, Russia — A key visit during the United Methodist delegation's visit to the U.S.S.R. was with the Russian Orthodox Archbishop of Ekaterinburg, Melkhisedek. It was agreed that Louisiana Bishop William Oden would seek the archbishop's blessing for the building of a United Methodist church in this city of 1.5 million. Bishop Oden expressed that hope during the first five minutes of the visit to which the archbishop immediately replied: "You have it." Shown during the meeting are (left to right): The Rev. Dwight Ramsey, pastor of Broadmoor UMC in Shreveport, United Methodist Bishop Hans Vaxbi of Helsinki, Finland, Archbishop Melkhisedek, Bishop Oden and Mrs. Lidia Istomina, lay pastor of the Ekaterinburg UMC that was established at Mr. Ramsey's initiative.

Tallinn: On Saturday, September 28, Marilyn and I departed St. Petersburg for Tallinn, Estonia, and the remainder of the group returned home. We traveled to Tallinn by Soviet train and enjoyed immensely our trip through western Russia into Estonia. We saw beautiful country with a number of crops. It became very evident that the hunger problem is more a matter of distribution than it is production (at least in that area). We were met at the Tallinn train station by Methodist Superintendent Olav Parnamets and Pastor Toomas Pajusoo. I had the joy of preaching to a large congregation in Tallinn on Sunday morning and speaking again at a mid-afternoon service. Our Estonian brothers and sisters have endured many hardships during years of intense persecution. They are now free and the Estonian Church is prospering with 16 congregations and 13 pastors. A new church building is planned in Tallinn, and progress is proceeding rapidly for that to happen. Our three days in Estonia presented new evidence that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. In its previous history, one Estonian Superintendent was murdered by the KGB and one sent to Siberia. It is no wonder that Prayers of Thanksgiving are prayed with great fervor in the Tallinn Church worship service.

The visit to the Soviet Union has been a life-changing event for all who participated. So many experiences, impressions and learning moments — so much to absorb and assimilate.

As I prepare my report to the Council of Bishops, I will also be eager to share my thoughts with the Louisiana United Methodists. Your prayers have sustained us on the trip and we feel your presence with us.

Marilyn and I are eager to resume our work in Louisiana. But you should know that we are not coming back alone. Our Russian and Estonian Methodist friends are very much with us.

Peace With Justice Week begins Sunday

The week of October 16-24 will be celebrated across the United States with a vision of peace based on justice. Both Protestant and Catholic Churches and such religious groups as Church Women United and Clergy and Laity Concerned will join in interfaith services to raise up "an alternative vision for our nation and our world in the midst of violence against people and the planet."

The United Methodist Church joins in this national ecumenical celebration and urges our conference churches to make known to all God's vision of a world at peace. We are asked "to reach beyond dominance and military victory to a peace based on true justice for all humanity."

Peace with Justice Week offers an opportunity to educate children about peace and justice and to listen to their vision of peace. Invite your children to illustrate their visions of peace through artwork, poems and songs and then display their work. Our children are the peacemakers in the near future. Let us share with them our vision of a new world.

Churches which have not sent to the Conference office their congregation's free-will offerings of Peace with Justice are asked to do so as soon as possible.

One-half of our Conference offering is sent to the national office for missionary and educational purpose. One-half remains in Louisiana to sponsor such activities as Carol Windrum's Justice Journey, next spring's state-wide tour by two Peace with Justice missionaries and support of peace education groups in our state. Let us be generous in supporting our vision of peace.

Persons, Places, Events

Mr. Hubert Blanchard, former Conference Lay Leader and current director from the Louisiana Conference to the General Board of Global Ministries, is offering his time and services to any district, local church or United Methodist Women's organization as a speaker on various mission projects.

He has travelled to Guatemala to meet with the "Naomi and Ruth" widows in the mountains — Mayan women whose husbands are missing or murdered because of rebel or police actions. He has also travelled to northern Mexico and has tapes of the work of the UMC in the Philippines and other places.

Mr. Blanchard may be reach at P.O. Drawer 29; Sulphur, La. 70664; 318/527-6227.

* * *

St. Matthew UMC, Metairie, is holding its 12th annual Craft Fair, Friday and Saturday, October 11th and 12th. On Friday, the hours will be from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thirty-three percent of the profits from the 150 craft booths go to undesignated mission projects through the United Methodist Women and the balance goes to the local church.

Besides the many handcrafted items available for sale, St. Matthew's will provide three food booths well stocked with plenty of home-cooked food.

* * *

Bishop John Wesley Hardt, Resident Bishop at the Perkins School of Theology, will be the speaker for the Fall Revival, October 13-15, at Kinder First UMC and Squyres UMC. The theme for the event is "Methodism: Who We Are."

Bishop Hardt was elected to the episcopacy in 1980. He served in the Oklahoma and Texas Conferences where he established his reputation as a great preacher.

On Sunday, October 13, Bishop Hardt will preach at 9 a.m. at Squyres and at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. in Kinder. On October 14 and 15, he will be preaching at Squyres each evening at 7 p.m.

The Reverend Darryl A. Tate is pastor of the Kinder-Squyres charge.

Around the Conference

Mr. Tommy Brown was named Employee of the Second Quarter at MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services at a recent employee meeting.

Mr. Brown is employed as a maintenance assistant at the residential home for children. He has been employed by MacDonell for two years.

Mr. G.J. Bridges, left, MacDonell president, presents the Employee of the Second Quarter Award to Mr. Brown.

The Confirmation Class of the First UMS, LaPlace, was recently received into the church. Dr. Charles Allen, former senior pastor of First UMC Houston, assisted Dr. Strong with the ritual. Dr. Allen preached a three-day revival at the church.

This year over 30 people have been received into the LaPlace Church family. Dr. Charles Strong is the pastor.

See the special
Good Samaritan Ministries
supplement on page 6.
(page 5 in local editions)

Workshop Scheduled

Louisiana State University in Shreveport is offering the BASICS of church sound system design and operation followed by an INTERMEDIATE seminar through the Division of Continuing Education and Public Service. Material will be covered by lecture and equipment demonstration.

The BASIC seminar is designed for persons with little or no background in setting up and running a simple church sound system. The seminar will show how to set up one which would be used in a small church or chapel. This seminar is designed to teach the BASICS of sound system design and operation.

The BASIC course will be taught October 19th at LSUS. The cost is $35 per person. The INTERMEDIATE course will be taught November 16th. The cost is $45 per person. Pre-registration is necessary.

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Editorial

Columbus & Christ-bearers

According to legend, St. Christopher (c. 250 A.D.) earned his name by carrying the Christ-child across a flooded river.

Christopher, in Latin, means "Christ bearer."

Significantly, and soberingly instructive for 20th century Christians, another Christopher reenacted the legend more than 1,000 years later.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus, followed by other European adventurers, transported Christianity across a hazardous body of water to the "new world"—but with notably mixed results.

A recent "Time" magazine article on a brewing controversy over the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival outlines some of those results.

It points out, for example, that the Columbian expeditions did indeed pave the way for European missionaries to introduce the Christian faith to indigenous Americans.

But, as numerous church bodies have lamented, Spanish conquistadors also left a decidedly unChristian legacy of violent conquest and enslavement of natives in the Americas—often in the name of Christ!

We're disinclined to join any debate that allows only two options about how to observe the quincentennial of Columbus' arrival in the Americas: totally bless it or totally bash it.

Unqualified, neither response reflects awareness of the inevitable mix of good and evil that typically attends such world-changing events.

However, the "Christ bearing" dimension of Columbus' exploits, positive and negative, contains a caution as well as a challenge for Christians of our day.

The challenge: We constantly must be alert to opportunities provided by current events for fulfilling our mandate to "make disciples of all nations."

The recent social and political upheaval in Eastern Europe and Russia offers a good case in point. Revelations of a deep spiritual hunger among peoples in previously communist-dominated countries all but cry out for Christianity's soul-satisfying message of God's love.

The caution: Efforts to share our faith with others—whether our neighbor across the street or across the globe—are rarely if ever completely pure in motivation or results.

As bearers of the Gospel, we remain imperfect human beings. It's often difficult for us to know for sure if our words and deeds arise more from Christian motives, cultural values or self-interest—or a combination of all three!

This insight is pertinent to the exciting opportunities for American Christians to reach out to "new worlds," particularly Russia and Eastern Europe.

For example, church leaders in those areas have said that they welcome our Christian witness and spiritual care. But they rightly caution against our exporting a la Columbus unwelcome cultural values that are more Western and secular than Christian in nature.

In short, as modern-day Christ-bearers, we need to recall the biblical truth: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

That awareness in no way should inhibit our efforts to share our faith confidently and boldly. But it reminds us that we should do so in a spirit of Christ-like humility and respect for others.

What others are saying

"The God who created once out of chaos can do it again."

—The Rev. Faith Conklin of Whittier, Calif., speaking to the United Methodist National Camp Leaders Conference.

Faithfully yours

Airport ordeal illuminated Russians' plight

We were involved in a mission filled with high purpose and great expectations. But I can't recall ever spending 24 hours feeling so totally frustrated and powerless.

Spurgeon Dunnam

Our group of 19 was scheduled to leave Moscow at 10:15 a.m. and fly 1,000 miles southeast to Ekaterinburg to worship with the first United Methodist congregation in Russia (see UMR, Oct. 5).

We were called at 6 a.m. to load our bags, but by the time we reached the "domestic airport"—that is, one not used by international travelers—we were told that all flights would be delayed for three hours because of fog.

Our guide apologized in advance for the crowded and otherwise unpleasant environment we likely would find in the waiting room.

Talk about an understatement! Inside we found hundreds of people jammed together like sardines and in the same fix we were.

Regrettably, Russian society hasn't yet set rules to protect those who are allergic to cigarette smoke. More people than not seemed to be filling the air with smoke.

Situation worsens

Although the fog cleared well before noon, the logjam of people and flights seemed to get worse.

When 1:30 p.m. passed with no sign of our flight being called, we began to ask questions. We were told that delays caused by the fog still were snarling the whole system.

At 2 p.m. we were told that our flight had been rescheduled for 4.

There was no food or fresh water. After a few hours, the small souvenir shop that sold warm soft drinks closed, leaving open only a dirty, crowded bar that sold local beer. Restrooms were so filthy that most of us could not bear to use them.

As 4 p.m. passed, we were told the new time for our flight was 8 p.m. By now we were tired and hungry, frustrated and confused. We began insisting that our guide secure food for us, which she first said was "impossible."

It also was "impossible" to give us more precise information about the cause of the delay or when our flight actually would leave.

Our guide said she would try to secure a bus to take the group to a restaurant to eat and freshen up. It took four hours for the bus to arrive. But by then we'd been told that the flight delay had been extended indefinitely. It would eventually go out, we were assured, but it might be 2 a.m.

At 8, our exhausted group loaded onto the bus to go for a meal. Even that was not simple. There were no restaurants close by, so we had to travel 30 miles back to Moscow and eat at the one place that could accommodate a group our size on short notice: the Hotel Belgrade. A member of our group found the Belgrade cited in a travel guide as one to be avoided at all costs. But by then we were hungry enough for its food to taste pretty good.

Concern mounts

At 11 p.m. we returned to the airport to continue our vigil. As the hours ticked by, we couldn't help but be concerned about the ability of an 84-year-old man and other elderly members of our group to withstand such abuse. Our guide secured a small smoke-free office for these to occupy. The rest of us, along with hundreds of others, got as comfortable as we could and waited.

No effort on our part yielded believable explanations or projections.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

MOSCOW, Russia—Several hundred persons, including a group of visiting United Methodists, get comfortable any way they can during a 25-hour wait without food or rest in one of Moscow's "domestic airports."

We felt terribly uncomfortable and uncared for. And we were absolutely stuck!

As group members pondered what we had gotten ourselves into and wondered how we'd ever get out of it, an announcement came shortly after 7 a.m. for us to board our plane. Still no explanations were offered. But we were so relieved to be heading for our destination that we managed to keep our bodies functioning despite 25 hours with little or no sleep.

We later learned that the area in which we kept vigil was plush compared with the terminal in which local citizens are required to wait.

A different perspective

Later reflection caused me to view this ordeal in a different way. There was no conspiracy to make life difficult for us. We were dealing with one of many parts of the Soviet system that simply does not work.

We were enduring hardships for a short time that ordinary Soviet citizens routinely encounter in nearly every sector of their society. We learned something more surely in this experience about those daily hardships than we could possibly have learned in any other way.

That realization coupled with information from the American Embassy helped to correct some distorted images of the current Soviet situation that we'd developed from media reports in the U.S.

Food situation clarified

Deputy U.S. Ambassador James Collins said the huge shortfall of food and other essential goods facing the Soviets will not result in massive starvation.

"There's no way we're looking at another Ethiopia here," he said. "Rather we are looking at chronic shortages that produce long lines, inconvenience, and malnutrition. And those who suffer the most are the very young and the elderly who must live on small fixed incomes."

Mr. Collins added that church relief organizations probably could have the most positive impact by focusing efforts on children, the elderly, and others who often fall through the cracks of government-sponsored relief programs.

Another form of hunger

Meanwhile, some of our Christian friends in Ekaterinburg offered us another important insight. As much as the Soviet people need additional food and other material help, they are at least equally in need of spiritual nourishment that has been withheld for many years.

"Your faith in God sustained you during your difficult wait in the airport," one said.

"Our people also need to know that there is a God who cares for them and who will sustain them through this time of difficulty."

Oh, yes, we did make it to the church—almost on time! Our hosts' vitality and enthusiasm for building a new church made the uncomfortable airport wait seem unimportant by comparison.

—SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

Mr. Dunnam is Editor of the Reporter.

Letters to the Editor

Women's Division should poll local churches

After reading of the opposition of the Women's Division to the nomination of Clarence Thomas in the Sept. 20 issue of the Reporter and having our district president of United Methodist Women confirm that she received a letter asserting "the view of the United Methodist Women," I want to suggest that the Women's Division in future ought to poll the local units to see what the average UMW view is.

The Women's Division is not our Master and does not speak for all of the United Methodist Women today!

Diana L. Lamphere
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Pontius' Puddle

© Joel Kauffmann

I'm saddened

As a Christian physician, I read with amazement and sadness your article about the Rev. Rodney Brown and his work for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (see UMR, Sept. 20).

I'm amazed that a person, clergy or lay, who claims to be a disciple of Jesus Christ could identify himself or herself with a company that produces a product that is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of God's creatures every year.

I'm saddened that your reporter did not even raise this issue during the interview.

Although I fully agree with the concept of supporting men and women in the work place and have long taught the Christian calling of almost any vocation, your article regrettably adds an undeserved degree of respectability to a reprehensible industry.

William D. Barnhart
Chicago, Illinois

More grace needed

When I received the Sept. 20 issue of the Reporter and read the article, "Making Sunday last through the work week," I realized I needed either a third work of grace, or the second one to be renewed.

I can understand why the folks in the Mission Society feel highly incensed when certain bishops refuse to appoint evangelical preachers to the Mission Society, to go where people are longing to hear the Gospel, and then to read that ministers are being appointed to Snap-On Tools and to a tobacco company which has been, and still is, producing a product that kills thousands of people every year.

This is nothing short of pharisaical hypocrisy.

Edward Chandler
Niceville, Florida

Whose Gospel?

Rod Saunders' "Here I Stand" article of Sept. 20 concerning the unofficial evangelical caucus Good News was right on the mark.

The Good News petition to which Mr. Saunders refers, monitoring United Methodist seminaries for faithfulness to church doctrine, sounds a lot like what the Southern Baptists have done to their seminaries.

When the Good News folk say they want "faithfulness to the Gospel," to whose interpretation of "faithfulness" and "Gospel" are they referring? Theological pluralism is at the heart of United Methodism.

I would like to add a group to Mr. Saunders' list of Good News alternative organizations, Evangelical United Methodist Women. EUMW has no connection with Women's Division or with the United Methodist Women, who by the way, number more than 1,060,000!

Bernice Burr-Wilken
Mancos, Colorado

Thank you!

Thank you! Thank you! I'm appreciative for Rod Saunders' "Here I Stand" article (see UMR, Sept. 13) and Cynthia B. Astle's article, "A good model for handling church conflict" (see UMR, Sept 20).

No church, or marriage for that matter, can last long where there is no respect for one another's opinions. The church has an opportunity to model for others what it means to be vitally growing despite differences.

We are truly on the threshold of a new paradigm of human behavior in the world. In the past we have sorted ourselves out with like opinions, like customs, and like ethnicity. It is no longer feasible to continue in this vein if we are to live in a global village. We truly are all one family under God.

To love and trust one another enough to struggle over differences is our ultimate calling and will strengthen The United Methodist Church.

Diane Richerson
Monahans, Texas

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: 2 Corinthians 4:7)

Readings for week of Oct. 14

Monday: Psalms 90:1-8
Tuesday: Psalms 90:9-12
Wednesday: Genesis 3:8-19
Thursday: Mark 10:17-22
Friday: Mark 10:18-30
Saturday: Hebrews 4:1-3
Sunday: Hebrews 4:9-13

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

SOVIETS SUPPORTED: Four United Methodists are on the World Council of Churches Central Committee which recently issued a letter to churches in the Soviet Union, committing support for their efforts for political renewal, freedom and respect for human rights. Among the 155 committee members are Bishop **Melvin Talbert** of San Francisco; **Jan Love** of Columbia, S.C.; **Kathy Bannister** of Washington, D.C., and **Ari de Carvalho** of Milwaukee. WCC policymakers also sent a letter to churches in Yugoslavia, asking them to contribute to a permanent cease-fire, an end to violence and the coming of peace.

BISHOP RECOVERING: United Methodist Bishop **F. Herbert Skeete** (Boston Area) is recovering at home after a Sept. 17 balloon angioplasty to clear a blocked coronary artery. The bishop's physician has not determined when he will be able to return to work, said **Ann Greene Whiting**, spokeswoman for the Southern New England Annual Conference. Bishop Skeete is president of the General Board of Global Ministries National Division but is not expected to preside over that division's meeting later this month in New York.

ECUMENIST DIES: The late **Dimitrios I**, spiritual leader of more than 250 million Eastern Orthodox Christians, played a key role leading to a scheduled July 1992 meeting between Orthodox and World Methodist Council representatives. He met twice—once in 1977, again in 1990—with Wesleyan leaders and agreed at the latter meeting that the time appeared ripe for further steps toward dialogue between the two faith groups. The patriarch died Oct. 2 in Istanbul.

CONSIDER EXPERIENCE: When the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America begins formulating an official church statement on human sexuality and addresses the issue of homosexuality, the experience of gays and lesbians should be the starting point, says a prominent ELCA pastor who is a member of the denomination's Church Council. "Everybody will want to start with the Bible, but it will be more helpful to start with the testimony of those most affected," the Rev. **Barbara K. Lundblad**, New York City, told a centennial symposium at Concordia College at Moorhead, Minn., an ELCA school.

CHRISTIAN FEAST: Nearly 5,000 fundamentalist Christians from 75 countries took part in the 12th Annual Christian Feast of Tabernacles in Israel. Organizers said they will protest President Bush's decision to suspend consideration of Israel's request for $10 billion in loan guarantees. The week-long pilgrimage was the largest since the Persian Gulf crisis in August 1990 and included Christians from virtually every part of the world. They included more than 1,000 evangelicals from the United States, 500 from Germany and 800 from Scandinavian countries.

RACIAL-ETHNIC DIVERSITY: United Methodists have been called on to "respond to the gifts and graces of women and men of color, language, ethnic and cultural diversity" in electing bishops next July. The church's General Commission on Religion and Race voted to send such a statement to each of the five regions in which elections will take place. At present 15 bishops are due to be elected in 1992 in the United States—two in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, three in the North Central, three in the Southeastern, six in the South Central, and one in the Western. U.S. bishops are elected for life terms.

Compiled from news and staff reports

All UM missionaries moved from Zaire

Stations destroyed; Global Ministries officials inspect losses

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

A wave of looting triggered by a troubled economy has led to the destruction of United Methodist mission stations in Zaire and caused all 46 United Methodist missionaries assigned there to leave.

Twenty-one returned to the United States.

General Board of Global Ministries officials hope the missionaries can return when the civil disturbances are over, said the Rev. Julius Jefferson, area secretary for the mission board's East Africa office.

On Oct. 3, Mr. Jefferson and retired Bishop Jesse C. DeWitt of Chicago, former Global Ministries president, arrived in Ndola, Zambia, to counsel and consult with United Methodist missionaries who left Zaire. The mission leaders reported holding a worship and communion service there.

Of the 46 UM missionaries, 10 are staying in Zambia and plan to work in the 40 United Methodist churches begun in recent years by church workers from Zaire.

Four missionaries went to Europe; 11 went to Nairobi, Kenya.

The United Methodist Church in Zaire has experienced great growth in the last decade. The country has more than half a million United Methodists in five annual conferences and three episcopal areas.

Bishop Fama Onema (Central Zaire Area) administers the conferences of West Zaire, Northeast Zaire and Central Zaire; Bishop Ngoy Kimba Wakadilo has the North Shaba Conference, and Bishop Kainda Katembo has the Southern Zaire Conference.

The rioting in Zaire began Sept. 23 when about 3,000 government soldiers went on a rampage in Kinshasa, apparently angry because they had not been paid for several months. Civilians were said to have joined the looting there and in other parts of the country.

As it happened, Bishop Onema had been in New York attending a World Division meeting. As of Oct. 4, he was still unable to fly back because the international airport at Kinshasa, Zaire, had been shut down.

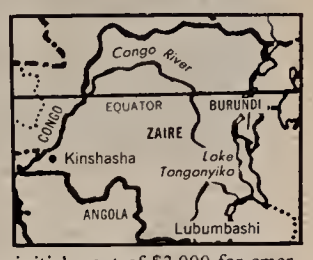
The problem, Bishop Onema told United Methodist News Service, is simple.

"People don't have enough things to eat. The prices go up, up, up, up."

Last week, Global Ministries spokeswoman Betty Thompson reported that World Division executives received a radio message from UM missionary pilot Lowell Wertz that Bishop Wakadilo and his family are safe.

Headquarters of Bishop Wakadilo in Kamina were ransacked. Mr. Jefferson noted that the bishop at first could not leave his home "because of shooting in the street" but later escaped to conference offices.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief has issued an initial grant of $3,000 for emergency needs in Zaire. Officials of UMCOR said additional funds will be sent as soon as needs have been assessed. Gifts may be sent to Advance No. 198400-4 and designated for Zaire Emergency.



Betty Thompson of the General Board of Global Ministries and Linda Bloom of United Methodist News Service contributed to this report.

Pastor recalls 'ocean' of Haiti 1990 election

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

PIGNON, Haiti—In this 1987 photo, a Haitian boy shows his goat to a Volunteer-in-Mission. Possession of a goat is a sign of wealth in this poverty stricken, violence-ridden country.

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

Less than a year after he had visited the troubled island-nation of Haiti, United Methodist pastor Wesley Williams was safe in Boston recently when a military junta there violently took power from President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

But Mr. Williams, coordinator of urban ministries for the United Methodist Southern New England Conference, lamented the ouster of the president he called Haiti's "hope."

"The people have no weaponry," he told the Reporter. "When the people are no longer afraid to die, then the coup has already lost."

Mr. Williams was among international observers who monitored Haiti's 1990 presidential election of Mr. Aristide, a Catholic priest.

An earlier attempt to elect a president had ended with a machete and machine gun massacre of voters—reportedly by an outlawed militia that brutally enforced the rule of the late Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claud.

Mr. Williams vividly remembers election night in Port-au-Prince.

"The word I think of is *'lavallas,'* a rushing of many waters into one ocean, because thousands of people were pouring in from every direction, jumping up and down.

"They were shouting, 'Tell everyone! Tell everyone! Titid (Little Aristide) is president!'

"There was such unity and support for the first popularly elected president of the oldest black republic in the world."

At the close of the new president's speech to an ecstatic crowd, Mr. Williams recalls, "I could not help but shudder and shiver when he looked out and said [to the defeated militia], 'Your day is over.' "

Mr. Williams said it is important to understand the influence the United Methodist Church has had in Haiti since the 1940s, particularly in literacy programs, education and vocational training.

"I am concerned that as we talk about the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia that we also talk about Haiti," Mr. Williams continued, "because of the implications for Haitian emigration and the economy."

Conditions in Haiti are so miserable that Haitians are flocking to this country, he said.

"One hundred thousand in New England does not begin to match the demographics of Haitians in Chicago, New York, Washington, New Jersey, Philadelphia and, of course, Miami," he noted.

Mr. Williams is involved in ministry to Haitian immigrants in the United States through a nationwide network of United Methodist congregations made up of or aiding the immigrants.

Haitians he has talked with in the U.S. want their president back, he said.

"And they are asking, 'Where is the church?' "

Florida Bishop Hughes 'weeps with those who weep' in Haiti

From news reports

United Methodist Bishop H. Hasbrouck Hughes Jr. (Florida Area) has called for continued efforts on the part of the Organization of American States, the United Nations and the United States to reinstate the elected government in Haiti.

"In this hour of great calamity for our Haitian friends, 'We weep with those who weep' and support them with our care and concern," the bishop said.

His call came along with those of religious organizations in the United States and elsewhere which condemned the coup in Haiti that removed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from office Sept. 30 and installed a military junta.

Haitian exile plans, delays return

Reporter Staff Special

The recent violent coup that shook Haiti and deposed that country's first freely elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, also derailed the plans of exiled Methodist leader the Rev. Alain Rocourt.

Mr. Rocourt, former chairman of the Haiti District of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas—an autonomous church not organically related to the United Methodist Church—had been asked by the Methodist Church in Haiti to return to head its lay leadership training center.

He was forced to cancel his plans to return Oct. 2 when all airports into Haiti were closed as a result of the coup, he told the Reporter.

Mr. Rocourt, the only Protestant on the nine-member council that drafted Haiti's new constitution in 1987, fled 600 miles north to the United States after some members of an illegal militia attempted to assassinate him that year, he said.

Since coming to the United States, Mr. Rocourt has coordinated United Methodist nationwide ministry with Haitian refugees through his office at Grace United Methodist Church in Miami.

He also coordinated the work of the eight Haitian United Methodist churches in Florida.

"What is happening in Haiti is another incident in the long process toward democracy in Haiti," he said.

Mr. Aristide "embodies the hope of the Haitian people," Mr. Rocourt said. "The people are saying it's Aristide or death."

One United Methodist familiar with Haiti after several trips there but who asked not to be identified confirmed press reports that President Aristide's supporters have used violent tactics since his election.

The United Methodist missionary in Haiti, Cecilia Manness, and her husband are believed to be safe, according to the Rev. Keith Ray of the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

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Male lay leaders still head most UM churches

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Is the lay leader in your local United Methodist church male or female?

Chances are at least two to one that a man holds that primary lay position in your congregation.

That's one finding of a survey released last week by the church's General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

Of the 511 churches that responded to the survey, only 32 percent said their local lay leaders were women.

During May and June the women's commission conducted a random-sample mail survey of 1,000 churches to gauge participation of women on local church committees, boards and councils.

Similar surveys have been conducted by the women's commission every four years since 1970.

The survey was administered by Charles Stewart, professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. He is also a member of Harvard-Epworth United Methodist Church in that city.

"I think the report speaks for itself," said Mr. Stewart. "In the traditional areas, there is slow plodding toward equality in the positions with the most authority in the congregation."

Mr. Stewart concluded that "the disparity between the 'participation' of women in the work of the local churches and their 'leadership' is still the starkest in the boards and committees that exercise the broadest authority within local church."

"For instance, while more than half the members of the administrative boards and administrative councils are, on the average, women, only 30 percent of administrative councils and 20 percent of administrative boards are chaired by them."

Commenting on the survey's findings, Jean Henderson, president of the National Association of Annual Conference Lay leaders, said, "There are probably many more woman lay leaders in the local church than we know about, because most smaller churches are virtually maintained by women.

"However, historically, in The United Methodist Church the position of lay leader has been filled by a man.

"I'm not bothered by the sex [of the officer] as long as committed, capable people are there," she said. "But I am bothered by the stereotype that 'the good ole guy' should be in charge."

Women's leadership in UM local churches

	Percentage of women members		Percentage of chairwomen	
	1987	1991	1987	1991
Administrative Council	58.9	57.3	27.6	30.6
Administrative Board	55.3	54.8	18.7	21.6
Council on Ministries	62.2	63.3	55.0	54.9
Trustees	31.7	35.1	11.6	15.9
Pastor-Parish Relations	53.8	54.6	42.5	44.6
Nominations	61.4	60.1	N/A	31.9
Finance	42.4	47.9	29.8	31.9
Stewardship	45.7	45.5	36.3	40.1
Evangelism	68.9	66.4	69.0	67.3
Missions	81.9	80.1	89.8	86.6
Worship	77.4	74.4	85.4	86.0
Education	79.5	78.3	84.5	87.1
Children's ministries	93.1	93.1	97.8	98.8
Family ministries	79.7	76.9	89.5	86.4

Some gains, some losses. That summarizes findings of the latest every-four-year study of women's roles in local churches by the United Methodist General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

Faith connections

GRADUATES TOP 4,000: Ewha Woman's University in Seoul, Korea, related to two divisions within the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, graduated 4,129 students in 1991. With 19,000-plus full-time students, Ewha is the world's largest all-female school. A predecessor hody of the church's Women's Division helped found the school, and the school's Speech and Hearing Center is related to the World Division (**Advance** No. 009130-1RA).

RAILEY GETS A JOB: Former United Methodist minister **Walker Railey** has a new joh as executive administrator overseeing the $750,000 budget of the 900-memher Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles. "They (church members) all walked into this along with me. I told them about my past and they said, 'Let's take a chance.' " Dr. Railey told the "Dallas Morning News." The former senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Dallas left the ministry in 1987 after a near-fatal attack on his wife, **Margaret (Peggy) Railey**. She remains in a vegetative state in a Tyler, Texas, nursing home. Dallas police continue to identify Dr. Railey as the sole suspect in Mrs. Railey's attack but have never filed criminal charges. An $18 million civil judgment holds Dr. Railey liahle for damages in the attack on Mrs. Railey.

FRESH PERSPECTIVES: More than 80 of the 133 directors of the church's General Council on Ministries will travel to one of 15 sites through mid-November to seek "fresh perspectives" on United Methodist ministry with Native Americans. There are ahout 17,500 Native Americans among 8.9 million United Methodists in the U.S. Sites visit, which hegan in mid-September, will include locations in New York, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Michigan, New Mexico, Florida, North Carolina, Washington, Delaware, Oklahoma and Arizona. Findings from the visits will be reviewed at the program coordinating council's Dec. 2-6 meeting in Chicago.

NEW WORLD MISSION: Nov. I is the deadline for applications from congregations that want to receive a "New World Missioner" in Spring 1992. The "missioners" are Christian clergy and laypeople from outside the U.S. who come to share the Gospel. Participants are expected from Australia, England, Ireland, South Africa, Liberia, Tonga, Brazil, Sierra Leone, India, Cuba, Barbados and Malaysia. For information, contact **Shirley Clement** at the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville.

CHURCH GROWTH: 1991 Circuit Rider Award winners for contributions to church growth are the Rev. **Michael F. Bailey**, pastor of Good Shepherd United Methodist Church in Memphis, Tenn.; the Rev. **E. Eugene Koth**, pastor of Walnut Hills United Methodist Church in West Des Moines, Iowa; and the Rev. **Patricia A. Spearman**, pastor of Jackson Chapel United Methodist Church in San Marcos, Texas. Winners were announced recently at the semi-annual meeting of the General Board of Publication, governing body of the United Methodist Publishing House. Each winner will receive a $1,000 gift certificate and plaque at a March 23 awards hanquet in Dallas prior to the hoard's spring meeting.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Christians called to aid anti-hunger effort

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

The new president of a Christian anti-hunger lobby says Christians have the power to secure millions of dollars for hunger programs—with the help of a 29-cent postage stamp.

"What's really powerful is an ingenious way to translate Christian causes to change the U.S. govemment through an offering of letters," says the Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World.

Succeeded founder

Mr. Beckmann made that assessment as he neared the end of his first month as president of the Washington-based hunger organization. A Lutheran minister, he succeeded the Rev. Arthur Simon, also a Lutheran minister and founder of the organization, Sept. 1. Mr. Beckmann spent the last 15 years as a World Bank economist.

Many United Methodists work in local feeding programs and give to their churches' hunger appeals through such programs as the Advance for Christ and His Church and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (one of many agencies in several denominations giving Bread for the World financial support.)

But "influencing Congress or the President can undo—or multiply—many times over the good voluntary contributions do," Mr. Beckmann says.

Mr. Beckmann described how Bread for the World is making a final push to wrap up the organization's "Horn of Africa" campaign. ("Horn" refers to the countries of Sudan, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia, whose appearance on many maps resembles a horn.)

Bread for the World has asked its 43,000 members to write U.S. senators and members of Congress to gain passage of the Hom of Africa Recovery and Food Security Act of 1991 (Senate bill 985). The bill has passed both houses and is expected to be signed by President Bush this month.

The bill calls for distribution of relief aid through non-govemment organizations and for U.S. and intemational support for negotiating peaceful solutions to conflicts in northeast Africa.

100,000 letters sent

Mr. Beckmann said at least 100,000 letters went to Congress from church groups last summer to lobby Congress for the legislation. Another onslaught of letters is needed to encourage the President to sign the bill, he added, and to help immediately implement provisions in that legislation.

Provisions include increasing food aid; sending equipment, transportation and fuel; and directing the Agency for International Development to direct aid straight to grassroots groups in the respective countries.

"The message I get from some politicians is that the U.S. government is tired of hearing about famine in Africa," said Mr. Beckmann. "My sense is that is the case regarding Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia. But what triggers recurring massive famine is warfare."

He explained that fighting between rebel groups and govemment troops in each of the countries has uprooted farmers, leading to famine.

Mr. Beckmann spoke of the major famine that hit the Ethiopian region during 1984. More than one million people died during that time, and hundreds of thousands became refugees in feeding camps.

22 million at risk

Now, some 22 million people in that area are at risk of starvation, with one million expected to die within the next year.

He said the Hom of Africa bill would address the root causes of hunger through equitable distribution of relief aid, seeds, tools and other rehabilitation aid regardless of whether civilians are in govemment- or rebel-held areas.

Finally, it calls for the U.S. to support peace initiatives in the three African countries.

REPORTER PHOTO BY MIKE CLEMENTS

The Rev. David Beckmann, president of the Christian anti-hunger lobby, Bread for the World, says that Christians can help assure adoption of legislation that will aid hunger relief in Africa by writing their U.S. representatives in support of the measure. Mr. Beckmann assumed his new post Sept. 1.

1991 yearbook profiles religious leaders

Religious News Service

NASHVILLE—What does the typical Protestant religious leader believe about the Bible and how it relates to the contemporary world?

Answer: There is no "typical" Protestant religious leader.

That appears to be one message from the 1991 edition of the "Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches," puhlished recently hy Ahingdon Press for the National Council of Churches.

Among reports in the most recent edition of the annual publication is a profile of social and religious attitudes of selected Protestant leaders that dramatically underscores the diverse character of the American religious community.

There appears to be no 'typical' Protestant religious leader.

For example, while 93 percent of Assemhlies of God officers believe the Bible is accurate in all matters of history and science, just 4 percent of United Church of Christ executives and 11 percent of United Methodist Church executives take that position.

And while 95 percent of Assemblies of God officials agree it is wrong for a man and woman to have sex before marriage, only 14 percent of United Church respondents and 36 percent of United Methodist respondents agree.

Asked to identify the most influential religious figures, the U.S. leaders most frequently mentioned include veteran church planner Lyle Schaller, Roman Catholic writer Henri Nouwen, church historian Martin Marty, theologian Rohert MacAfee Brown and evangelist Billy Graham.

Meanwhile, the yearbook's statistical membership report shows that the nation's two largest church hodies, the Roman Catholic Church and Southern Baptist Convention, posted membership gains in 1990 while a number of prominent "mainline" Protestant denominations continued the membership slide that has plagued them since the mid-1960s.

On offering-plate matters, figures for selected denominations include: Southem Baptist, $308; United Methodist, $300; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), $632; Episcopal, $764; Disciples of Christ, $510; Cumberland Presbyterian, $347.

Among other yearbook data:

- 40 percent of Americans attended a church, synagogue or mosque in a given week last year.
- Women and blacks were more likely to attend weekly worship than men and whites.
- People who attended college worshipped more often than high school graduates.
- 69 percent of Americans claimed membership in a congregation.

Study says members giving less to churches

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

U.S. Christians had about 10 percent more disposahle income in 1989 than in 1985, but they gave a smaller percentage of it to their churches.

In addition, an increasing portion of what church members gave was spent for expenses within their own congregations, possibly contributing to an erroneous perception of "donor fatigue" in relation to world needs.

Those are among results of the latest study, "The State of Church Giving" by Empty Tomb Inc., a non-profit Christian research organization based in Champaign, Ill., and headed by John and Sylvia Ronsvalles.

The Ronsvalles' previous study tracked giving patterns in 31 Protestant denominations representing 30 million church memhers in the U.S.

The Ronsvalles updated their study with figures from the 1991 "Yearhook of American and Canadian Churches," released Oct. 4 by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. The new volume provides information for 1989, the latest year for which complete data are availahle.

In 1968, the Ronsvalles found, 30 million American church memhers gave 3.05 percent of their incomes to their congregations.

By 1985, that amount had slipped to 2.79 percent; by 1989, to 2.64 percent.

In the final section of their new report the Ronsvalles challenge recent interpretations of a phenomenon dubhed "donor fatigue."

News analysts have surmised that a decline in giving to world needs—such as hunger or disaster relief—is caused by people's perceptions that the needs are greater than their resources.

A more accurate assessment based on the "Yearhook" data, say the Ronsvalles, appears to be that church members are keeping more of their money at home in their congregations.

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'Racial/ethnic minority' term preferred

BY ROBERT LEAR
United Methodist News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—"Racial and ethnic minority" is a term that should be retained in United Methodist usage "as a means of correcting injustices of the past," a denominationwide task force said Sept. 19 in San Juan.

"No other term has been found that can adequately describe today's realities and is equally powerful to remind us of our continuing need to correct the injustices of the past and build a new racially inclusive church," the 17-member panel declared in its final report to the denomination's Commission on Religion and Race.

"As this new racially inclusive church is built, we will continue to search for new terms that better describe the Household of God."

Use of the term "ethnic minority," used by the church for years, was questioned by the 1988 General Conference, the church's top legislative assembly. The issue was referred to the General Commission on Religion and Race.

The task force said in its report that "it became obvious . . . that the issue at heart was not so much the definitions or the term used but the prejudicial and racist attitudes that are acted out through behavior and language. The power of language to shape and mold viewpoints, ideas and attitudes; to shape our perception of ourselves and our relationships with others was highlighted as the core of the issue."

A "clear demand from Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander and Native Americans to be called by the name they would choose for themselves" was evident, the report said.

At the same time, the report said, a need was voiced for terms that "adequately describe socio-economic, religious and political realities."

An estimated 410,000 racial and ethnic members are among the 8.9 million United Methodists in the United States and Puerto Rico.

Columbus' 'discovery' called 'violent takeover'

United Methodist News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Christopher Columhus' 1492 "discovery" in effect was a violent takeover "in the name of Jesus Christ" of inhahited lands, leading to servitude of their native peoples and centuries of imperialism, the United Methodist Church's racial monitoring agency was told Sept. 21 in San Juan.

"Discover is a nice word, but Columbus intended something else entirely," Luis N. Rivera-Pagan, a Puerto Rican educator and researcher, said in an address to the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.

Dr. Rivera-Pagan is the author of a recently published book dealing with Columbus and other explorers.

"The 'discovery of America' led immediately to its conquest, an act of violence performed from beginning to end in the name of Jesus Christ, the martyr of divine love," Dr. Rivera-Pagan said. He is an associate professor of humanities at the University of Puerto Rico.

See related editorial on Page 2.

Later in the San Juan meeting the commission's Native American committee asked that the "500 years since the arrival of Columbus" not be celehrated by the United Methodist Church.

Similar cautions have been voiced hy otber groups within United Methodism and by a number of mainline Protestant denominations and ecumenical organizations.

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Overt anti-semitism on the rise?

Vienna conference will ponder plight of Jews in Eastern Europe

By RUTH E. GRUBER
Religious News Service

ROME—Hand in hand with political and economic changes—including the assurance of freedom of religion—in the nearly two years since the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, nationalism and xenophobia have also come to the fore.

The shocking brutality of the civil war between Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia is one manifestation of this.

The rise of overt anti-Semitism in most of the former Communist countries is another.

Traveling widely in Eastern Europe over the past year and a half, and meeting with members of the local Jewish communities there, this correspondent has witnessed evidence of this and has spoken at length with local Jews about their fears for the future.

Before World War II, about 5 million Jews lived in Eastern Europe, not counting the Soviet Union.

Today, the total number of Jews in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria is only about 150,000—many if not most of these people are elderly Holocaust survivors.

The anti-Semitism manifesting itself today is in a sense "anti-Semitism without Jews."

In Poland for example, fewer than 10,000 Jews remain, compared with 3.3 million before the war.

Religious groups concerned

International Jewish groups, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, have expressed mounting concern over the trend, and Jewish and Catholic leaders, including the pope, have pledged to combat the phenomenon.

A major conference on fighting anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe is scheduled for Vienna Oct. 27-29.

"The freedom and openness that has spread throughout central and Eastern Europe present new challenges and opportunities, as well as problems and dangers," according to the American Jewish Committee, which is sponsoring the conference.

"There is a renewed, popular appeal to national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities. However, there is a deep concern that, alongside these developments, there is also a sharp increase in xenophobia and appeals to hatreds based on religion, ethnicity and race."

Manifestations of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe have ranged from the desecration of Jewish cemeteries to scrawled slogans on synagogue walls, to anti-Semitic insinuations in electoral campaigns, to articles in the press to episodes of violence.

Right-wing nationalist political parties, and their publications, particularly in Poland, Hungary, the Slovak portion of Czechoslovakia and Romania, have picked up on the anti-Semitic theme and published articles accusing Jews of causing the countries' problems.

Anti-semitic slogans common

Anti-Semitic slogans are the common theme at nationalist rallies.

The constantly repeated accusation is that Jews "brought communism" into the various countries, as a number of leading Communists after World War II were of Jewish origin. Present-day politicians of Jewish or partly Jewish origin, such as Romania's Petre Roman, have come under particular attack.

And non-Jewish political figures, such as Poland's former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, have been accused of being Jews, in order to play on prejudices and turn voters against them.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Family studies the Bible

Karen and Keith Hennick and their two sons, Nick and Chris, of Jonesboro, Ark., study the Bible in their kitchen. This is a part of their daily family routine.

Review

Reviewer: Pope movie silly but good gospel

By HILEY H. WARD

Despite being a light melodrama that gets a little silly at times, there's enough truth in the satire and enough fun in the sight gags and one-liners to make "The Pope Must Die" (titled "The Pope Must Diet" in some areas) a very enjoyable movie.

And there is some good gospel in this comedy.

The title seems a misnomer, for it doesn't capture the essence of the story. The title apparently refers to the central character, a peasant guitar-strumming priest (rotund Robbie Coltrane) who by a clerical error becomes Pope David I.

Mixup makes new 'Pope'

It happened when a hard-of-hearing buffoon priest clerk mixes up Albini and Albinizi, so the peasant non-achiever Albinizi is consecrated Pope instead of the proverbial silver-haired, multi-lingual Albini.

The corruption of the Vatican Bank does not come as surprising news, and its potential link with the Mafia was explored in the recent "Godfather III."

And the idea that a pope is unusually benign and wants to mix with the people has been explored by novelists, namely Morris West in "The Shoes of the Fisherman" and more lately in his best-selling "Lazarus."

Treat some of this less seriously and you have comedy with perhaps more impact than a straight-faced approach.

The Mafia is in evidence as the dons keep in touch by their walkie-talkies with the cardinals during the consistory to elect a pope.

Alex Rocco as Cardinal Rocco, key pitchman for the dons, works both sides of the aisle during the papal election like a street politician.

The contrast between the good-hearted Father David Albinizi, soon to be pope, and the church around him is set early. He is playing his steel guitar in the countryside, entertaining the kids at a *festivale del orphano.*

A stern-faced nun declares: "I never witnessed such barbaric behavior!"

The chubby father, who resembles the ample but lovable Pope John XXIII, meekly responds, "I'm trying to get them into the music to enjoy the hymns more."

The dour nun replies, "They are not supposed to enjoy hymns!"

Father David notices people are bowing and genuflecting to him. At last it dawns on him something is happening. As he babbles, an old priest says, "Shut up Albinizi—you've been made pope."

The new pope, decked out in white, takes a liking to the comfort, but nevertheless joins in following an exercise video, "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, work that fat until it's gone."

Helping poor a 'crazy idea'

He gets the crazy idea that he can help people.

"I'd like to start my papacy by taking all these riches and giving them to the poor," he says.

It seems the new pope had some accounting training and he peers over the voluminous books of *Banco di Vaticano* late into the night.

He rushes to the main branch of the bank the next day and, in a fury, yanks out money drawers, overturns the tables and screams, "This bank is closed!"

Dr. Ward is a journalism professor at Temple University in Philadelphia. He frequently reviews films for the Reporter.

St. John's Abbey Church celebrates 30th anniversary

2,500 tons of concrete support abbey bells

Collegeville, Minn.—The massive bell banner of Saint John's Abbey Church dominates its Collegeville hillside. The banner supports thousands of pounds of bells. It stands 112 feet above the pavement and is made of 2,500 tons of concrete and heavy steel rods. The largest bell weighs more than 8,000 pounds. The cross, 15 feet high and 8 feet wide, is made of native white oak. The architect for the church's award-winning design is Marcel Breuer. The church seats 2,000. The Benedictine monastery observes the 30th anniversary of the church's dedication Oct. 24.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

When does cheerleading lead to murder plots?

Commentary

By A. JAMES RUDIN
Religious News Service

A tragic incident like the "Texas cheerleader plot" is a lightning flash that suddenly illuminates our society's moral landscape and reveals what values really seem to matter in today's America.

Like so many other communities, the people of Channelview, Texas, a small town near Houston, are fervent about high school football games. Star athletes become idols; equally adored are the cheerleaders.

It is a seemingly harmless slice of society that is quite familiar to millions of Americans. I grew up in such an environment in Alexandria, Va., and my wife was the head cheerleader at University High School in Urbana, Ill.

Murder not the usual result

Cheerleading has always been a matter of great personal status and self-esteem, and competition for selection is usually fierce and even cruel. But disappointment in not being chosen does not generally result in murder plots.

Something went terribly wrong in Channelview when 37-year-old Wanda Holloway could not accept the fact that her daughter, Shanna, had been rebuffed in her efforts to become a cheerleader.

In fury, Wanda contracted her former brother-in-law to arrange the murders of her neighbors, a young cheerleader and her mother. Incredibly, Wanda believed that the removal of her daughter's rival would allow Shanna to replace the murdered cheerleader.

The brother-in-law reported this macabre plot to the police, who had him record Wanda's incriminating plans for murder. The price for killing both the cheerleader and her mother was set at $7,500, but Wanda opted for a lower price, $2,500, to murder only the mother.

At that point, Wanda was arrested, indicted, and a jury found her guilty of soliciting a murder. She is out on bail, and her case is on appeal.

Is this an aberration?

What in the world was going on in Channelview? Is this gothic tale an aberration?

But in a society of affluence, increased leisure time, and unrelenting quests for self-aggrandizement, Wanda Holloway's behavior is not an aberration.

It is not too different from any other community where children are forced by their elders to become adults before their time and where children rapidly absorb the seductive values of the jaded grown-up world. Not too different from any other community where the role and importance of school sports is inflated to provide live entertainment for a bored adult world.

And yet . . . who among us has never privately wished another person dead in order to advance our ambitions, our sexual lusts or our quest for power?

While being questioned in court, Wanda said to the jury, "You just don't understand." But she was wrong. Most of us understand Wanda Holloway and her desperate longing for recognition all too well.

The prohibitions in the Ten Commandments against murder and covetousness, along with the injunction to love one's neighbor as oneself, remain fresh and compelling today precisely because they reflect an accurate understanding of human nature.

Rabbi Rudin is the national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee.

Dear Deborah

Widow on fixed income says church wants her out

Dear Deborah:

I am a widow with a fixed income. The church where I have had my membership for 56 years recently sent me a letter suggesting that if I cannot financially support the church it would help if I withdraw so they don't have to pay apportionments for me.

I gave them lots of money when I had it. My husband and I tithed and we gave 85-90 percent of it to the church.

We also worked, served on committees and boards, taught Sunday school and were active in United Methodist Women (long before it was called that) and United Methodist Men when we had one.

For many years I was organist and choir director, all for no pay. Do you think this is the way to treat members when they are old and facing hard times?

I am not going to sign my name because there are many of us. I know.

Dear Writer:

I, too, know there are many facing this situation. And many churches seem to think this is a way to "save" money.

All I can say is that it seems to me those churches are flirting with extinction. What will it profit them to gain financial advantage and lose their own soul?

I do not believe the Holy Spirit resides in churches which treat their members this way.

I hope you will not withdraw. I hope you WILL pray daily that God will pour out a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit upon the church and that we come to our senses before it is too late.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

History of Hymns

Christmas service inspires 'His name is wonderful'

His name is wonderful, his name is wonderful,
His name is wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.
He is the mighty King, Master of everything:
*His name is wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.**

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

According to Audrey Mieir's own account, these lines were written on a Christmas Sunday morning in 1958.

She and her family attended the church in Duarte, Calif., where her husband's brother was pastor.

Pine boughs and flickering candles decorated the church, and a manger scene had been constructed in the choir loft. An air of expectancy was felt. Mrs. Mieir was aware of the fragrance, the sights, and the sounds, but even more the gentle moving of the Spirit.

With opened Bible, the pastor stood and said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace."

Flushed with a moment of rare inspiration, Mrs. Mieir wrote on the flyleaf pages of her Bible, "His Name Is Wonderful." In a few moments both words and music were notated.

That Sunday evening she taught the chorus to a group of young people in her church and it was sung for the first time.

First published by Manna Music a few months later, the song has become widely known.

Born in Leechburg, Pa., Audrey Mieir was educated at L.I.F.E. Bible College and was ordained to the gospel ministry in the International Church of Foursquare Gospel in 1937.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"O Breath of Life"

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United Methodist church hosts Jewish congregation

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—At the invitation of a neighboring United Methodist Church, a Jewish congregation has found a place to worship while their own sanctuary is closed for repair.

The cooperative arrangement between the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew and B'nai Jeshurun, both on Manhattan's Upper West Side, is symbolized in a large banner—created together—proclaiming a verse from Psalm 133: "How good it is when brothers and sisters dwell together in harmony."

That message was above the altar as the Revs. Ed Horne and James K. Karpen of St. Paul and St. Andrew's were introduced during recent Rosh Hashana services. They were given a standing ovation.

"It was incredibly moving for us to stand beneath that banner and look at 1,500 people throughout the sanctuary," Mr. Horne said.

After the service, he added, dozens of people from B'nai Jesburun's congregation thanked the two United Methodist pastors.

Among the grateful were tearful Holocaust survivors who told them they had thought this day of unity would never come.

B'nai Jeshurun—the third oldest Conservative synagogue in the United States, led by Rabbis Marshall Meyer and Rolando Matalon—will continue to use St. Paul and St. Andrew's sanctuary for regular Friday-night and Saturday-morning services for the next year or so.

The church offered the space after part of the ceiling collapsed in B'nai Jeshurun's sanctuary last May.

The church was already housing the synagogue's homeless shelter while part of its facility was under renovation, and the two congregations had begun talks about an interfaith center at the St. Paul and St. Andrew's site.

"The relationship that we had with them, I think, helped a lot," Mr. Horne said.

One of B'nai Jeshurun's concerns was finding enough space for the High Holy Day services in September. During the summer, the seldom-used balconies at St. Paul and St. Andrew's were "load-tested" with 40,000 pounds of sandbags.

The balconies passed, but after the outside facade of the building was deemed dangerous, scaffolding was erected "to catch any falling pieces," according to Mr. Horne.

Good Samaritan Ministries of the Louisiana Conference

The Lafon Home

Scenes From Lafon Nursing Home Auxiliary's Annual and Fashion Show

It is said that the graying years can be unkind, to gifts of body, heart, and mind. The graying years are like waves at sea. They wash away what used to be, yet we find strength to live each day with the gifts that have not been washed away, for we survive, the spoils of time, with prayers of faith that soothe decline.

The Lafon Nursing Home Auxiliary of the United Methodist Church presented its 8th Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show, September 14, 1991, Bayou Plaza Hotel Grand Ballroom, 4040 Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Co-chairpersons for the activity were Ms. Fran Lawless and Mrs. Dorothy Pennington. Mrs. Myraline Jamison is the President. Fashions were by the Treasure Chest of New Orleans.

Much emphasis is placed on this activity because with strong support the money realized is given to the Lafon Nursing Home in order that needed equipment, supplies and other items not possible to obtain on the very tight working budget are made available.

The Administrator, Mr. Edward Lang, fully lent all the support and help needed to move our activity. We were happy to see an appreciative number of ministers attending the activity and we trust each minister will become a life member of the Lafon Nursing Auxiliary and in this effort it will reflect the expression, "WE ARE OUR BROTHERS' KEEPER."

"... For the children of God are in need of friends to give love that is true and without end."

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Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center One Of Top In U.S.

The Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center makes it possible for patients to have outpatient surgery utilizing their own physicians in a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere, and to return home for recovery — all in the same day.

The Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center, which continues to be rated one of the top facilities of its kind in the country, is part of the Methodist Health System of services. The Center is located on the Methodist Hospital campus in New Orleans.

Advances in medical technology have made many types of surgery less complex and time-consuming, according to Center Administrator Michael Gossman. "Today, many minor procedures may be performed in a relatively short time, with shorter recovery periods," he continues. "Using the Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center is an affordable alternative for routine procedures."

More than 300 different types of operations, ranging from tooth extractions to cataract surgery, may be performed.

Chaplains routinely visit patients and their families in the waiting and recovery areas.

The Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center also houses the East New Orleans area's only state-of-the-art lithotriptor, the latest medical advancement for the treatment of kidney stones. Today, painful stones may be eliminated in over 90% of the cases diagnosed for surgery through this non-surgical procedure.

In addition, the Eye Surgery Center of Louisiana, located on the Methodist Hospital campus, utilizes the facilities of the Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center. Recently, Opthalmologist Stephen F. Brint, Medical Director of the Eye Surgery Center, performed breakthrough surgical treatment for nearsightedness. Four patients were treated with the outpatient procedure, known as excimer laser myopic keratomileusis (MKM) as part of a trial sanctioned by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The Methodist Ambulatory Surgery Center.

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The Measure Of One's Worth

One of the joyous responsibilities of the recent trip to Russia was joining Bishop Hans Vaxby of Northern Europe in naming Ms. Lydia Istomina a "Local Pastor" (Lay Pastor) and appointing her to serve the Ekaterinburg United Methodist Church. This action was enthusiastically affirmed by the congregation.

But then came a difficult decision. What would her salary be? Bishop Vaxby, the Rev. Dwight Ramsey and I met with a newly-formed finance committee of the Russian congregation to decide that question. Historically, in Communist Russia, the manual labor jobs were paid the highest salaries; what we call "the professions" were paid low salaries. For instance, among the highest-paid positions in the Soviet Union was the worker who stood closest to the heat in a copper or steel smelting plant. That worker received 800 rubles per month. Doctors, by contrast, received 250 to 400 rubles per month.

After considerable discussion with the newly-designated finance committee, there was unanimous agreement that the pastor's salary should be 800 rubles per month since the pastor certainly had to take a lot of heat! We also designated 800 rubles per month for church administration.

As the exchange rate is 32 rubles per U.S. dollar, the agreed-upon salary equals $25.00 per month with an equal amount for administrative expenses.

I provided the treasurer $1200 for two years of pastor's salary and administrative expense, a gift from the Louisiana Conference.

I was also able to present to Bishop Vaxby a gift from the Louisiana Cabinet in the amount of $1000 to be applied to a new United Methodist Church building in Tallinn, Estonia, where a congregation of 700 has been renting a Seventh-Day Adventist building.

Very few gifts so small have had so great an impact! But then, worth is not measured in dollars or rubles!

William B. Oden

AIDS Task Force: Workshops Teach Louisiana Young Adults to Care

The Lousiana Conference AIDS Task Force was busy this summer with church camps at Istrouma and Uskichitto. The educational workshops it conducted included medical information concerning AIDS along with suggestions on ways to deal with teen peer sexual pressure. Additionally, legal, ethical and spiritual issues concerning AIDS were stressed. Printed materials were distributed to participants for future reference.

In all, approximately 450 young adults were given educational information that could save their lives and enable them to develop a mature and sensitive Christian response to persons living with AIDS and their loved ones.

The chairman of the AIDS Task Force, Mr. Peter Braswell, was excited with the young peoples' positive response to the workshop. They asked many questions at the end of the presentation. He added that "if anyone doubts that our children are curious and are experimenting with sex, they should have heard the questions. The questions often disclosed more than did anything else."

Additional plans of the AIDS Task Force include a poster contest; targeting Sunday school classes, grades one through six. Scholarships for first, second and third places will be awarded in the amounts of $500, $250 and $100 respectively to the classes for their educational needs.

Another project will be a special service of AIDS awareness called, "A Service of Hope, Healing & Renewal" to be held simultaneously in churches throughout the conference. The date will be early December in conjunction with the Advent theme of Hope.

Other ministries provided by the AIDS Task Force include pastoral counseling with AIDS-knowledgeable persons and networking with local community-based AIDS organizations to obtain services for persons with AIDS and their loved ones. Specially-tailored presentations and workshops are offered to any church in the conference free of charge.

For additional information or to schedule an educational workshop in your local congregation, call or write: Peter Braswell, 805 Hickory Avenue, Harahan, LA. 70123; (504) 737-5363 (day) or 737-9621 (night).

Mr. Peter Braswell, chairman of the Louisiana Conference AIDS Task Force, talks to Junior High groups at summer camp.

Business Magazine Ranks Centenary in Best Buys

For the second consecutive year, Centenary College has been ranked as one of the Best College Values by **Money Magazine**.

Centenary is ranked 22nd out of 100 colleges and universities including Rice University, Princeton, Trinity University, Yale, Auburn and the University of Virginia.

The rankings are based on criteria such as student/faculty ratio; faculty strength; library resources; graduation rate; percentage of graduates who go on to earn graduate or professional degrees; business success, as well as financial data.

Here's how Centenary fares on a few of those factors:

Tuition and Food	$7,210
Room and Board	$3,060
Student/faculty ratio	11 to 1
Percent who earn graduate degrees	31%
Average ACT Score	24
Percent from top half of high school graduating class	89

The magazine's second annual survey analyzed 1011 colleges and universities and identified 100 best values. Centenary, the only Louisiana college to be included in this year's list, placed 22nd in the listing, up from 26th place last year.

The top 100 list contained 56 private schools, including some of the nation's priciest campuses: Yale, Stanford and the University of Chicago, where tuition exceeds $16,000.

Centenary has also been rated as one of America's Best Colleges by **U.S. News and World Report** and one of the best buys by Edward Fiske, education editor of **The New York Times**.

Dillard's 122nd Founders' Day Speaker is 'A Woman to Watch'

Dr. Joyce M. Roche: Founders' Day Speaker

Dr. Joyce M. Roche, a marketing vice-president with Avon Products, Inc., and a Dillard alumna, will speak at Dillard University's 122nd Founders' Day Service on Sunday, October 20, at 4 p.m. in Lawless Memorial Chapel.

Dr. Roche is one of the highest-ranking Black females in corporate America. She joined Avon in 1973 as an associate planner and rose through the ranks to become the company's first Black female vice-president and its first Black vice-president of marketing. She supervises over 70 employees and manages an annual budget of $20 million.

Black Enterprise magazine named her this year as one of the "21 Women of Power and Influence in Corporate America." **Business Month** magazine in 1989 named her one of the "Top 100 Women to Watch in Corporate America," adding to her 1986 recognition by **Dollars & Sense** magazine as one of the "Top 100 Black Business and Professional Women in America."

A 1970 graduate of Dillard University, she also holds an M.B.A. from Columbia University. North Adams State College awarded her an honorary Doctor of Laws degree after she spoke at the college's 1991 Commencement Exercises.

The Founders' Day service is open to the public.

Dr. Joe Harding to Lead Workshops

Dr. Joe Harding

Dr. Joe Harding will conduct a two-day conference at First United Methodist Church, Pineville, on Nov. 22-23, 1991. On the first day, Friday, the 22nd, he will lead a conference on Effective Preaching. The following day the conference will be primarily for laity dealing with Laity Evangelism and the whole concept of Vision 2000.

The textbooks for the conferences will be **Have I Told You Lately . . .?** and **Vision 2000 — Planning for Ministry into the next Century**, both of which were written by Dr. Harding. For further information, contact the Rev. Jimmie D. Pyles, pastor, (318) 443-0426 or the Rev. Richard Hoffpauir, district superintendent, (318) 443-3213.

In Memoriam

Mrs. Josephine Alexander, widow of the Reverend King George Alexander, died September 28, 1991.

Mrs. Erma R. Lester, widow of the Reverend Lee A. Lester, died on September 29, 1991.

The Reverend Allen Richard Reeves, Jr., who in past years served the Louisiana Conference, and his wife, Mrs. Esther Jerille Reeves, were killed when they were hit by a car while riding their bicycles. Mr. Reeves, 58, died September 25, 1991, and Mrs. Reeves, 57, died September 27, 1991. Religious services were held September 30th, 1991.

Adult 'God and Service Award' Presented

Mr. T. Selwyn Blouin and Mrs. Reba Duke Staples with their God and Service Awards.

Mrs. Reba Duke Staples and Mr. T. Selwyn Blouin, members of Clinton United Methodist Church, were honored in a unique and special way at a service recently held at their church. The God and Service Award for Adults was presented to them by their minister, the Reverend Rod Kennedy.

The God and Service Award for Adults "is a national recognition awarded by churches and agencies cooperating in the Commission for Church and Youth Relationships." It is given for distinguished service by adults in ministry to young people through service to the Church and one or more of the national youth agencies (Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Camp Fire, Inc.).

Friends of the honorees worked secretly for several months gathering the necessary information for the award. Scoutmaster George J. Charlet Jr. collected the many tributes to these outstanding people that culminated in the service.

Nolley's 'visits' other land

The local unit of Nolley United Methodist Women had a fun-filled Sunday fund raiser this fall.

Four countries were selected to emphasize native food, dress and customs. They were: The United States, Mexico, Italy and Japan. Japan received special attention because it will be one of the UMW's studies for next year. Native decorations adored the fellowship hall and games such as knock-down-the-pinatas were held for children and special guests.

Proceeds from the ticket sales went to further UMW mission programs. The pastor at Nolley is the Reverend William E. Nolan.

And Again . . .

Nolley UMC youth participate in "Noah's Ark" at Panama City Beach.

Forty-two youth and adults from Nolley Memorial United Methodist Church, Jena, travelled to Panama City, Florida, this summer to participate in Noah's Ark. Noah's Ark is a beach ministry project and a church retreat center of the Alabama-West Conference. There countless young people find enjoyment in the musical witnessing program that is presented Friday through Saturday nights.

Haven UMC: 1883-1991

Haven United Methodist Church will celebrate its 107th Anniversary November 12-18. Founded in New Orleans in 1883 by the Rev. Madison C. B. Mason, Haven moved into its present building in 1927. Guest ministers, the Rev. Joseph Tilly, the Rev. Kenneth Fisher and the Rev. Julius Jefferson, will preach on the theme, "Fulfilling the Spirit." The Rev. Russell Jones is pastor of Haven.

Help Gulfside Keep 'Trucking'

The Board of Trustees of Gulfside United Methodist Assembly recently purchased a badly-needed truck for use at this interracial retreat center in Waveland, Mississippi. So far, less than half of the $7,806.94 purchase price has been raised. The Board currently needs $4,564.94 to eliminate the debt. Please send your donations with the notation, "new truck," to Dr. Charles Kellogg; Gulfside Assembly; P.O. Box 27; Waveland, MS 39576.

Members of Gulfside Assembly are shown with the group's new vehicle.

Congratulations!

The Reverend and Mrs. Ken Irby (Kay) are the proud parents of an 8 lb., 9 oz. boy named Nathen John. Nathen John is their second son.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Editorial

Silence on sexual abuse: No more

A wave of widely publicized incidents bas heightened awareness of an issue too often hushed up in our society: sexual abuse, most often of women by men.

Consider:

■ Voting on a Supreme Court nomination was delayed by the U.S. Senate after an Oklahoma law professor accused the nominee of sexually harassing her 10 years ago.

■ Numerous celebrities, including a former Miss America, have spoken out about incidents of sexual violence inflicted upon tbem as children by parents or relatives.

■ Tbe current Miss America has recounted via "People" magazine her experience of being regularly beaten by a former boyfriend.

Sucb incidents only begin to tell the shocking larger story, according to experts. For example, recent researcb findings show that:

✓ One out of three girls and one out of seven boys in the U.S. are sexually abused before age 18.

✓ One out of every two U.S. women bas been battered by her spouse or partner.

✓ And as many as 88 percent of female employees report having suffered sexual barassment at work.

Regrettably, surveys show tbat the church is as guilty as tbe rest of society in dealing with sucb matters mostly by silence.

We believe the time is overdue for Christians to take tbe lead in remedying that neglect.

In the past, two primary factors have blocked many Christians from recognizing, let alone condemning, incidents of sexual abuse: an unhealthy reluctance to deal frankly and openly with sexual matters and a tendency to misuse Scripture to justify male domination.

As Christians, however, we need to state clearly and unequivocally that sexual abuse violates God's will.

That the victims are mostly women and children is particularly abhorrent. These victims typically are unable to defend themselves against the advances of a physically stronger male and/or adult.

In some cases, the post-harassment trauma that follows sexual abuse is so overwhelming that its victims are unable to sustain healthy relationships with others or to feel worthy of relationship with God.

Sexual abuse occurs in a variety of forms. While abuse involving physical violence is the most serious, other forms such as verbal abuse and coercive intimidation are by no means morally trivial.

While it is difficult to agree on a precise definition of sexual barassment, those who have endured it from persons wielding power over them know that it is anotber real and dehumanizing form of sexual abuse.

Jesus teacbes His followers to show particular concern for tbose least able to protect tbemselves (Matthew 25:40). Here are three ways that individuals and congregations may begin to address this important need:

First, speak out! Openly acknowledge and deplore the reality of sexual abuse and confess that we too often have remained silent wben we should have condemned it.

Second, seek ways to promote the spiritual and emotional bealing of persons victimized by sexual abuse, beginning with a willingness to listen to their stories of pain and anger.

Finally, cooperate with community agencies and law enforcement officials to create or improve protective services for victims of sexual violence such as shelters for battered women and cbildren.

My Witness

Being pastor-for-a-month was a breath of fresh air

By R. SHELDON DUECKER

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Bishop R. Sheldon Duecker is the episcopal leader of United Methodism's Chicago Area. His article is reprinted by permission from the Reporter's Northern Illinois conference edition.

The Sabbath is a time to rest and renew our relationship with God. It is a time to catch our breath, sigh deeply and, at least momentarily, escape the stress of life.

It is a time to stretch the mind, rest the body and feed the spirit.

This summer was a special Sabbath for me; our quadrennial renewal leave came this summer. We attended the World Methodist Conference in Singapore, visited friends in Japan, worked at our Indiana farmhouse, entertained guests and spent time with family.

One of the most rewarding experiences was the four weeks I spent as a local cburch pastor. I selected the First United Methodist Church of Warsaw, Ind., because I had been pastor there more than 20 years ago and because they wanted me to come since their minister was traveling in Asia for six weeks.

I wanted to get in touch with the local church again and to do it in a faith community where I had once been pastor.

It felt good to hone some of my pastoral skills. I was free from the responsibility for program development and worry about the budget.

However, I observed regular office hours; called in hospitals and retirement homes and residences; met with community groups; counseled troubled persons; shared in a week-night Bible study group; encouraged workers in a soup kitchen; preached four Sundays; and taught classes five Sundays.

It was a breath of fresh air for my spirit.

The importance of the pastoral role was brought home to me again. It took little time or effort to establish a pastoral relationship with the members of the church. They trusted me with their family concerns, their disappointments, and their loss for zest for life. They sought counsel on a variety of subjects.

With one former parishioner, I was able to face and resolve a misunderstanding that was more than 20 years old. There is no other relationship in our culture that can serve in the same way pastors do.

The importance of the church as a loving and witnessing community was evident in many ways. One hospitalized person spoke for many when she said, "I just couldn't make it without my church!"

At the end of the renewal leave I was ready and anxious to come back to my duties as episcopal leader in northern Illinois. I have come back refreshed and with a renewed appreciation for the work our pastors and lay people do in the local churches.

Here I Stand

Couples' pain of infertility deserves our compassion

By DOUGLAS WILLIAMS

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Douglas Williams lives in Los Angeles, Calif., and is an associate pastor of Westwood United Methodist Church (California-Pacific Annual Conference).

The week of Oct. 20-26 is National Infertility Awareness Week— not an event which appears on the calendar of church-related causes.

Concern about infertility, however, is something that affects many young couples within our congregations.

It is estimated that 10-15 percent of couples of child bearing age, already have, or will, experience some form of infertility.

Five years ago my wife and I began our unplanned journey down the emotional road of infertility. Like so many couples who are married in their mid-20s, we were not ready to start a family.

When we started trying to bave a family we were 27 and 28 years old. Like so many couples we thought, "We have time. Infertility is something that happens to others."

I am not sure we really knew what infertility was. Unfortunately, we quickly learned that infertility is painful, frustrating, expensive and isolating.

It seemed as though everyone else our age was having children, which drove us further into isolation. It is painful when the question, "So when are you going to have children?" is asked by parishioners and colleagues.

It is expensive as we endure medical and surgical procedures, many of wbich are not covered by health insurance.

It is frustrating when month after month we hope for a positive pregnancy test, and it once again comes back negative.

Our faith has been challenged as we read, teach, and preach the Scriptures: "Be fruitful and multiply," or once again hear the story of Abraham and Sarah who, at ages well beyond ours, conceived and bore Issac.

Our faith has also been strengthened, not in the hope that God will provide us with a child but in the knowledge that God is with us in our struggle.

We have received support from others who are with us on this journey and from those who are sensitive to our pain.

And so I write this, that you might be sensitive to those in your midst who may be struggling with infertility, for it is not something that is easy for them to discuss.

You can help by being aware of the young couple who avoid church gatherings where young children and babies are present, or the couple without children whose eyes tear up during baptisms.

They may be struggling with infertility. Ask the couple who has miscarried more than once if they have been trying to conceive for a long time. Be sensitive to the strain that infertility puts on the couple's relationship.

When the infertile couple does confide their struggle in you, don't ask every montb if they are pregnant; if they were, they would tell you.

Don't say things like, "Just relax," "Take a trip," or "Don't try so hard." They have already done all of these.

Do pull upon all your empathetic skills to support them.

Most of all, minister to them by being willing to enter into their pain and to walk with them on their journey.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you." (RSV)

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : _____

(Last week's answer: Isaiah 41:10)

Readings for week of Oct. 21

Monday: Psalms 35:10-18
Tuesday: Psalms 35:19-28
Wednesday: Isaiah 53:1-6
Thursday: Isaiah 53:7-12
Friday: Mark 10:35-40
Saturday: Mark 10:41-45
Sunday: Hebrews 4:14-16

Faithfully yours

'Now I will become a leader for God'

"Hello, I'm Eugene," said tbe tall, smiling Russian man who suddenly appeared in. the lobby of our hotel one morning before breakfast.

Spurgeon Dunnam

"I policeman and also writer," he said, in broken English, "and I want you come to my home."

Our interpreter helped me understand that Eugene and his family planned to be baptized that evening during special services of Russia's first United Methodist local churcb (see UMR, Oct. 4). Eugene and his family wanted my son, Daniel, and me to join them and an interpreter after the service for dinner.

Always curious about how people in other cultures live, I accepted. My skeptical side also was interested in exploring his religious background and why he had decided to be baptized and join the churcb.

That evening, Eugene, bis wife Elena and one of their 16-year old twin daughters were among 137 people who crowded onto the stage of Ekaterinburg's borrowed Philharmonic Hall to be baptized.

The service didn't end until 9 p.m. We were drained from tbe beat and the emotional intensity of the experience. But there was Eugene, ready to load us into his car and take us to his flat. And we had promised.

Like most Russians, the Nevolina family lives in a massive multi-floor apartment bouse witb no elevator. But the inside of their flat was spotless, well ordered and decorated witb many family treasures.

One of the two bedrooms was set up to double as a dining room where we were served an elegant three-course Russian meal. It was prepared by tbe Nevolinas' other twin who, it was decided, should postpone ber baptism in order to stay home and get ready for rare American visitors.

Neither Eugene nor Elena had any sort of religious upbringing otber than the state "religion" of communism. "Our grandparents were baptized Russian Orthodox believers, but our parents were unbelievers," Eugene said.

They pulled out the family photo album, showing us their wedding pictures, shots of their daughters as infants, and pictures of Eugene in the Russian army and at the local university.

I asked him if he was a communist then, and he responded: "At the top of my class. I was a leader," he said, his voice trailing off. "But communism has failed."

With the meaning system around which he had built his life collapsing, Eugene said he began groping for alternatives.

Friends introduced bim to the Christian gospel and invited him to find new meaning for his life through faith in God. They invited him to attend services of the new Methodist church. He was attracted by the combined emphasis on freedom and personal responsibility.

EKATERINBURG, Russia—UMR Editor Spurgeon Dunnam and son Daniel dine in the home of Eugene and Elena Nevolina (center and right) and their daughters, Tatyana and Natali (left). During the visit, Mr. Nevolina shared the story of his journey from communism to the Christian faith.

"Now I will become a leader for God," Eugene said.

And I believe be will, perhaps somewhat in the mode of Simon Peter.

The Nevolina twins played us a lovely version of Beethoven's "Minuet in G" on their mandolins. We talked late into the night about matters deep and matters trivial with our new friends.

Well after midnight we returned to our hotel room exhausted but deeply satisfied by the sense of God's presence and leading during this day.

—SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III
Mr. Dunnam is Editor of the Reporter.

Welcome to new readers in Hendersonville

UMR welcomes as new readers some 850 families of **First United Methodist Church in Hendersonville, Tenn.** (Tennessee Conference).

This is the latest edition to join more than 350 congregations that publish UMR editions.

To our new readers in Hendersonville, we say, "Welcome aboard." We hope you'll find your church newspaper interesting and informative.

We also hope you'll join with other readers in providing feedback through such columns as "Letters to the Editor," "Here I Stand," "My Witness," and "FaithLine."

And to our continuing readers across the church, we say, "Thank you for reading your edition of the United Methodist Reporter."

Letters to the Editor

'Unhorsing' Circuit Rider is big mistake!

I am appalled, shocked and dismayed that the governing board of the United Methodist Publishing House is giving serious consideration to "unhorsing" tbe Circuit Rider as its official logo (see UMR, Oct. 4).

Richard Listenberger stated tbat "young people today don't even know wbat a circuit rider is." If that's true, then now is the optimum time to educate them as to what the circuit rider was and how we owe him a mighty debt for faithfully keeping the cburch together and helping it to grow in the days of pioneer America.

I find it interesting that the word "Cokesbury" would be retained. However, I doubt if 10 percent of United Methodists could give an accurate accounting of the term.

M. Thomas Swantner
Urbana, Illinois

A resounding 'no!'

The Oct. 4 article headlined, "Circuit Rider riding into sunset?" which led me to use tbis forum to sound a resounding "no!"

If the circuit rider is no longer a symbol of the United Methodist Publishing House, how long before it is totally forgotten by United Methodists? The circuit rider is a part of our history that should not be lost.

Richard Listenberger is quoted as saying that "Now is the time for a change." Really? Could it be that Mr. Listenberger has a vested interest in such a change? Now is not a time for change but a time to teach our young people a very important part of our history.

According to the article, a logo was being sought that would be recognized by church members and the general public alike. A new symbol would require a publicity campaign to make it recognizable. Such a campaign could be used to make the circuit rider as recognizable as any other chosen.

If we forget where we came from as a denomination, how can we know where we are going?

Jerden Davis
Fort Worth, Texas

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

DEAN, FAMILY SAFE: Yemba Kekumba, dean-elect of the United Methodist-related Africa University, theology faculty, and his family are reportedly safe in Kinshasha, Zaire, site of civil unrest. Dr. Kekumba, rector of Protestant faculty at a theology school there, plans to be in Zimbabwe in time for the opening of classes at Africa Univerity March 23, 1992.

LEADERS VISIT KOREA: Church leaders seeking reunification between North and South Korea recently paid an official visit to Nortb Korea. Among them was the Rev. S. Michael Hahm, a United Methodist and chairman of the Korea Church Coalition for Peace, Justice and Reunification. The 26-member delegation had been part of a reunification conference in South Korea, sponsored by its National Council of Churches, before arriving Aug. 31 in Pyongyang, North Korea's capital city, for a 10-day visit.

ECUMENICAL STRUGGLE: The World Council of Churches has given final approval to a new organizational structure. Meeting in Geneva, the World Council's Central Committee okayed a plan that will reduce staff from about 300 to 270 by the end of 1992.

DISCIPLES GATHER: As many as 10,000 members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may be in Tulsa later this month wben the General Assembly elects its top executive. The Rev. Michael Kinnamon, nominee for tbe post, shared that expectation last week with his colleagues on the United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concems. Dr. Kinnamon's nomination has caused controversy in his denomination because of his support for the concerns of homosexual persons. He serves on the United Methodist agency as an ecumenical representative.

SEXUAL ISSUES STUDIED: A five-member group has been appointed to develop a plan of study for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. on issues related to human sexuality. The plan will be presented to the denomination's policymaking General Assembly next summer. Last June the General Assembly rejected a report that offered a rationale for sex outside the traditional norms of marriage.

VIOLENCE CONDEMNED: A top Mormon leader condemned domestic violence and sexual abuse during the cburch's recent semiannual General Conference in Salt Lake City (see related editorial on Page 2). President Thomas S. Monson condemned child abuse as vile and heinous. He said that some children witness their fathers savagely beating their mothers, while others are on the receiving end of such abuse. Mr. Monson said hospitals everywhere are treating bruised and battered children whose guardians tell bald-faced lies of accidental injuries.

STAFF CUT: Almost one-fifth of the Episcopal Church's national staff has been eliminated in a major reorganization and shakeup stemming from budget woes in the 2.4-million-member denomination. Significant job cuts were expected since the church's General Convention in July ordered an across-the-board 10 percent spending cut. Even before the convention, officials at the Episcopal Church Center were exploring the possibilities of staff and program reductions to meet an anticipated $1 million budget shortfall in the current year.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Chinese Anglican confronts United Methodist agency

Theologian says 'I'm a Christian. . .but I may change'

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—The late-morning sun, shining through the auditorium window, cast a cross-shaped shadow behind the Asian theologian as she spoke.

"Christians need to come together to witness to the grace of God, to be a visible sign of hope for our human brokenness, and as a means to work for justice for people regardless of sex, race, sexual orientation or religion," she asserted.

These provocative challenges of Dr. Kwok Pui-Lan of Hong Kong last week confronted directors of United Methodism's ecumenical and interfaith agency.

Dr. Kwok, an Anglican and a lecturer in theology at Chinese University of Hong Kong, was keynote speaker for the Oct. 5-9 meeting of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

Asian theology evolving

Her moming-long presentation to the ecumenical commission centered on how Asian Christian theology is evolving and how those understandings relate to Christians worldwide and to adherents of other faiths.

Commission members later said they found her presentation both profound and profoundly disturbing.

Dr. Kwok painted a rich cultural landscape by displaying slides of the works of Asian Christian artists and by teaching the gathering to sing a Chinese hymn.

She drew tears, both from herself and her audience, when she described the assassination of a Roman Catholic priest in Sri Lanka, murdered while he conducted Mass for workers.

She spoke passionately of the impact on her theology from her visits with Korean mothers of political prisoners and with an Indonesian prostitute so devalued she had no name, only a number.

Dr. Kwok asserted that it is against this backdrop of human suffering that contemporary interpretations of Asian Christianity must begin.

"Religion for Asians isn't something we believe; it's something we do," she explained.

What Christians in the United States and other parts of the West must understand are the forces that are transforming Christianity in Asia, Dr. Kwok added.

Four factors cited

Dr. Kwok cited four factors in a new Asian faith understanding:

1) Conversion. "We kept this from the missionaries," she said. "We still must tell our stories."

2) "Inculturation," or "indigenization," that is, the adoption of Christianity apart from the influences of foreign missionaries.

3) Seeking justice together. "There are many problems in Asia: political oppression, economics, malnutrition," she explained. "Seeking justice for all this suffering is a necessity, not an option."

4) Using Asian idioms and symbols to interpret Christianity to Asians. "We want to articulate a Christian understanding of God that is not offensive to our Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian friends WHOM WE LOVE," she emphasized.

As an example of the last point, Dr. Kwok cited the stir caused in February by her friend and colleague, Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung of Seoul, South Korea.

Dr. Chung, a Presbyterian theologian, drew criticisms of "syncretism" for invoking Asian goddess images in her theological address to the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia.

Speaker draws challenges

Dr. Kwok herself drew some pointed challenges from her United Methodist audience when she asserted that contemporary Christianity must seek justice and human rights rather than understanding itself as a "better truth" than other beliefs.

"I'm a Christian because I find the Christian symbols meaningful to me, empowering to me, but I may change," she said. "You think you need to be a lifetime Christian? The Spirit moves in very strange ways."

She contended that hearing "minority" voices such as hers helps provide Christians a critical "self-evalution" that exposes the frequent human failings of "making our God too small" and "making an idol of Christianity."

The Rev. Young Il Kim, a professor at UM-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., and among a group of visitors at the meeting (see related story), told the commission later that he was disturbed by Dr. Kwok's presentation because sbe bolds that Christianity is "not unique."

"Dr. Kwok asked us to hear the voices of the art she showed, but what I hear is the crying of the missionaries who went to Korea to save souls," said Dr. Kim.

Dr. Kwok is the 1991-92 guest theologian in the Stony Point Center-Auburn Theological Seminary Visiting Scholar program based in New York. She also will lecture this year at several United Methodist seminaries.

Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area), chair of the commission, said Dr. Kwok's presentation had given the directors "much to consider" in Christians' relations with followers of other religions.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA BLIE ASTLE

NASHVILLE—Kwok Pui-Lan of Hong Kong challenged directors of United Methodism's ecumenical and interfaith agency last week to learn more about Asian theology. Dr. Kwok, an Anglican and a lecturer in theology at Chinese University of Hong Kong, was keynote speaker for the agency's meeting.

Guests level kudos, criticisms on ecumenists

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Do you ever let visitors to your local congregation critique what you do?

That's exactly what the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concems did at its Oct. 5-9 meeting.

The commission's guests commended much that the agency does but also shared some criticism—most of it having to do with local congregational experiences.

Barbara Smith Jang, a student at UM-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., urged commission members to use "personal interaction," such as visiting local congregations, to "help people feel the pain and the enthusiasm of ecumenism."

The Rev. John W. Chatham, Christian unity and interreligious concerns chair for the Southeastern Jurisdiction, said, "You have a lot of smarts in this room, but we have a lot of United Methodists with a grade-C education. If I were you, I'd get into a Sunday school class in the local church. There's a lot to be said for just listening to what goes on."

John David Ramsey, a Duke Divinity student, urged the commission to be more sensitive to the "passionately held beliefs" of local United Methodist congregations.

"You've talked about educating and teaching people, but you also need to be prepared to be taught," Mr. Ramsey said. "I know you have a prophetic function, but you must also be willing to be prophesied unto."

Dr. Teresa Berger, a Catholic who teaches at UM-related Duke University Divinity Scbool in Durham, N.C., said she experienced the pain of division in Christianity by being unable to participate in communion during the commission's visit to Edgehill United Methodist Church in Nashville on World Communion Sunday.

"I would like for the commission to go to an Orthodox church or a Catholic church where you could experience that pain of exclusion because you couldn't take part in the Eucharist," she said.

"I think that confrontation would lend you strength for the struggle for unity."

Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area), commission chair, said staff and directors would consider seriously all their guests' comments.

"This is not just a courtesy on our part; it's very important to our self-evaluation," Bishop Grove said.

Agency decides to keep tongue-twisting moniker

Reporter staff special

NASHVILLE—If you're still learning how to say "Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns" as it relates to a United Methodist ministry, you'll be relieved to know you won't have to learn a new name, at least not in the near future.

Directors of the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concems—the most tongue-twisting name in the United Methodist lexicon—decided last week that they won't ask the 1992 General Conference to change their agency's name.

That's because they couldn't think of a simpler, more explicit, way to describe what they do.

Directors decided they're going to work harder at helping local congregations understand what their work is about.

The agency oversees United Methodist efforts at achieving greater unity among Protestants, Roman Catholics, Orthodox and other varieties of Christians.

It also works on acbieving better understanding and respect between Christians and believers from other world religions.

The commission approved:

- A resolution for the church's policymaking 1992 General Conference that would provide a theological basis for considering suicide appropriate under certain circumstances of dying. This would expand upon the recently published joint United Methodist-Roman Catholic statement, "Holy Living, Holy Dying";
- A recommendation to continue United Methodism's membership in the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. and the World Council of Churches.
- A request for $14,000 from a special churchwide contingency fund for a 1992 Native American consultation among United Methodists, other Christians and Native Americans who follow traditional religions;
- A resolution urging local congregations to use the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival as a time for reflection on the role of the church in the oppression of native peoples as related to European colonialism.
- A statement on United Methodist-Muslim relations to go to the 1992 General Conference. A United Methodist-Jewish relations statement was postponed.

Faculty Position

United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, a United Methodist school, seeks to fill a tenure-track position in Theology beginning July 1, 1992. M.Div. and Ph.D. required. Emphasis in constructive theology preferred. Ability to teach Wesleyan doctrine desirable. **Send inquiries to: Dean Newell J. Wert, United Theological Seminary, 1810 Harvard Boulevard, Dayton, OH 45406.**

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Christians in Israel 'endangered'

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

Is Christianity dying out—maybe even being killed out—in Israel?

It's possible, says one Christian who should know.

He's the Rev. Alex Awad, a Palestinian-born United Methodist missionary who for the past 30 months has fought what seems to be a losing battle with the Israeli government.

The battle centers around attempts by this ordained Southern Baptist minister to gain a visa to reenter Israel so he can resume the pastorate of East Jerusalem Baptist Church. The United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries has two other missionaries in Jerusalem, but Mr. Awad is the only Palestinian.

Endangered species

"Christians have become an endangered species in the Holy Land," Mr. Awad told the Reporter, adding that this assertion is a part of the address he usually gives when speaking in local churches.

"Jews can flood into there from the Soviet Union or anywhere else and they are welcomed and given immediate citizenship rights," he continued.

"Palestinians have no such rights. They are not citizens under the Israeli constitution but are *residents* of the West Bank. The racist-policy state of Israel wants to eliminate both the Christian and Islamic presence from Israel."

Meanwhile he and his U.S.-born wife, Brenda, have begun a one-year assignment as mission interpreters for the church's General Board of Global Ministries in the eight-state South Central Jurisdiction.

Last year they were Peace with Justice educators stationed by the church's General Board of Church and Society in Syracuse, N.Y.

Although his new supervisor, the Rev. Ken McIntosh, jokingly estimates that Mr. Awad may be on the road 360 days out of the next 365, the couple and their three children welcome the opportunity to settle into a community. Their lives have been full of false starts and delayed responses.

Protest hits sidewalk

His unsuccessful efforts to return to Israel via a temporary resident's permit reached a new level of public attention Oct. 2 on a sidewalk in front of the embassy of Israel in Washington (see related photo).

About two dozen supporters, including four bishops, gathered there for a prayer service on the day of a scheduled meeting with Ambassador Zalman Shoval to discuss the repeated denials of a visa for Mr. Awad, a naturalized U.S. citizen.

The ambassador canceled the meeting with Mr. Awad and church leaders, saying he must go to the United Nations in New York City, according to Sue Robinson of the church's General Board of Global Ministries staff. She said the meeting has been rescheduled tentatively for mid-November.

The Awads cite two specifics and a host of technicalities as main reasons why Israeli officials seem determined to keep them out of that country.

One is an article he wrote for the May 1991 issue of "Christian Social Action" magazine, published by the General Board of Cburcb and Society.

In it he described the suffering of the Palestinian community in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war.

As an adjunct to his published remarks, he told the Reporter, "Every Palestinian lost in that war. During the 40 days' curfew which the Israelis imposed following tbe war, Palestinians lost income. They couldn't go to their jobs. They were virtual prisoners in their own homes."

He said 50 percent of the parishioners in the Baptist church he has been called to serve are unemployed and survive only by living as extended families. Tourism-related work such as manufacture of souvenirs is their main source of income, he added.

The other reality behind his exclusion from Israel is that Mr. Awad's brother, Mubarak, is "on the top of the Israeli hate list."

Mubarak Awad was arrested and imprisoned in Jerusalsm in May 1988 and, 40 days later, was deported despite protests by U.S. officials.

As a means of fighting for Palestinian rights, Mubarak Awad founded the Center for Nonviolence on principles established by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

"He lives in Washington, D.C., and he is a very brave person," Alex Awad told the Reporter. "We talk with him often."

United Methodist News Service contributed to this report.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

WASHINGTON—The Rev. Alex Awad and about two dozen supporters gather near the embassy of Israel Oct. 2 for a worship service in support of his bid for a visa to serve as a United Methodist missionary in Jerusalem. At left is Sue Robinson of the church's General Board of Global Ministries; to Mr. Awad's left is Anna Rhee of the General Board of Church and Society.

Faith connections

LAYWOMAN ELECTED: A Native American United Methodist laywoman, **Anne Marshall** of Oklahoma City, was elected Oct. 5 an associate general secretary of the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. Ms. Thompson, an elected director of the General Board of Church and Society, is a human rights specialist for the State of Oklahoma. She fills a vacancy left last year by the election of the Rev. **Bruce Robbins** as the Christian unity commission's chief executive. She will assume her new post in January.

Anne Marshall

HISPANIC PLAN APPROVED: A plan for ministry to Hispanic-Americans focused on a corps of lay missioners and calling for expenditure of $3.1 million during 1993-96 has been proposed by a United Methodist study committee for transmittal to the church's top legislative assembly. Bishop **Elias G. Galvan** of Phoenix, chairman of the study panel, said the document "presents a real challenge to the church and an opportunity to be in ministry in a way we never have before."

BUT WILL SHE LIVE? The Rev. **Ann L. Sablan**, a district superintendent in the South Indiana Annual Conference, was impressed Sept. 6 when a family she visited in Zaire named their newborn daughter Ann Lorraine after her. "I was overwhelmed by the honor as I held her, but then I thought 'Will she live?' (because the infant mortality rate in Africa is so high)," Ms. Sablan told some of her fellow directors of the church's General Board of Discipleship last week. In Zaire she was part of a group hoping to set up cooperative mission efforts to Tanzania by South Indiana and the North Shaba Conference in Zaire. The group visited Zaire early in September before recent riots broke out.

GETTING MONEY BACK: United Methodist clergy in Virginia who lost funds to a financial adviser may be getting about half their insurance investment back, said Bishop **Thomas B. Stockton** (Virginia Area) last week. Bishop Stockton said the insurance company is attempting to return what the clergy have paid in, but other funds handled by the financial adviser, who has declared bankruptcy, may be irretrievable. "Some clergy paid in as much as $18,000," Bishop Stockton said.

Church renovation includes unique art gallery

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

MINNEAPOLIS—An arts-oriented United Methodist church is about to celebrate the renovation and 75th anniversary of its building and, within that building, a unique art gallery.

As much as any one person, lay member T. B. Walker helped make it so.

When the present Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church was built 75 years ago, the lumber baron and art collector reportedly asked, "Wouldn't it be nice if the church had an art gallery?" He further gave his personal art collection to the church for display in the gallery.

In fact, the nearby Walker Art Museum, one of the nation's top museums of contemporary art, is named in his honor, as is the Walker Sculpture Garden.

The church's art gallery, opened in 1917, still has 20 paintings from his collection, Inez Sauby told the Reporter.

Ms. Sauby, a lay member of the church, is the head docent of the Hennepin Avenue art ministry.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

MINNEAPOLIS—Inez Sauby, left, and her sister, Irene McKean, team teach art classes at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church. Discussing renovation of the 75-year-old building, including its art gallery, with them is Chris Jackson, the church's diaconal minister for program.

European religious art

Most of the original collection is 16th to 19th century Northern European religious art, she said, although some Italian and Spanish works are included.

The gallery also houses a collection of David Roberts lithographs of Israel.

Ms. Sauby, for many years a docent at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, conducts art classes at the gallery, sometimes in tandem with her sister, Irene McKean, who gives the Bible exposition of the art.

The art program is able to draw on the many visual arts experts in the area. The experts provide up-to-date information on the works and the artists and, at times, help restore paintings.

The Minneapolis Institute of Art, for example, has been "very generous about helping us—without charge most of the time," Ms. Sauby said.

"We are so excited to find that we had a masterpiece in our collection: 'Abraham and the Three Angels' by Pieter Pourbes, a 16th century Flemish painter," she added.

Part of larger renovation

The original Walker collection will soon be on display in a renovated gallery which is a part of a $3 million overall renovation of the church buildings.

"We are returning the church to the same splendor it had in 1916," said Chris Jackson, diaconal minister for program.

The church's design was inspired by the 13th century Ely Cathedral near Cambridge, England.

The week beginning Oct. 20 will mark the opening of the 75th anniversary of the church's dedication.

Ms. Sauby curated a sculpture show to coincide with the opening.

Activities related to the opening arts events have been coordinated by a task force from the art committee, Ms. Sauby said.

More than visual arts

The arts at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church are not limited to the visual arts.

The Rev. Richard D. Waggoner recently completed 25 years as minister of music. In his years at the church, Mr. Waggoner has developed the Sanctuary Choir into an ensemble of 80 voices. The choir often sings with full orchestra.

The "Music at Hennepin" concert series was inaugurated in 1980. The series continues to present artists in numerous concerts and recitals.

Also unique to Hennepin Avenue Church is its annual Christmas pageant. The production, which costs $100,000 annually, and is presented some 20 times, is financed by gifts from two families in the church—Glen and Marilyn Nelson and Curt and Arlene Carlson—in memory of their daughter and granddaughter, Julie Nelson. She was killed in an auto accident in 1985 while returning to college in Massachusetts.

Photo copies of Dead Sea Scrolls loaned to Duke

DURHAM, N.C.—United Methodist-related Duke University's Perkins Library has been named to receive, on indefinite loan, a copy of a 3,000-photographic negative collection of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Duke University announcement came just a couple of weeks after Huntington Library in San Marino, Calif., said it would make its set of photographic negatives of the Dead Sea Scrolls available to scholars and researchers.

The materials, expected to arrive in early 1992, will be housed in the Duke Divinity School Library.

Before Huntington Library released the photographs—a virtually complete set of all of the known scrolls texts—only a small group of scholars had access to the ancient Jewish manuscripts (originals or photographs) found four decades ago in caves near the Dead Sea.

"Scholarship is not necessarily better if it's limited to a few," Duke University librarian and vice provost Jerry Campbell said.

"I, as a librarian, believe in the democratization of scholarly knowledge. The more widespread we make these materials, the more progress we'll make in research," he said.

The scholarly value of photographs and new information on the Dead Sea Scrolls cannot be measured, he continued.

It is not known if other United Methodist-related institutions will receive a copy of the collection.

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Youths outline back-home solutions to church's war on drugs, violence

Reporter Staff Special

ATLANTA—If a young person from your area was among the 85 youths attending the recent Pan-Methodist Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence, you can expect that someone plans to hold you accountable to help arrange similar local programs in the near future.

That was one recommendation of these young followers of John Wesley during their four-day meeting in Atlanta.

Prefacing the "back home action plan" was the question, "What can the church do to help youths who are concerned about alcohol, drugs and violence?"

The youths said church leaders should:

- Network with other youth groups if your church has no weekly youth programs.
- Take time to tell youths that God loves them.
- Set up an organization for youths with a Christian atmosphere.
- Reach out to youths beyond the church walls.
- Share the concerns of youths and listen to their problems.
- Host parties after football and basketball games, offering an alternative to places that sell alcohol.
- Educate small children about the problem of drug abuse, alcohol use and violence.
- Affirm people in rehabilitation centers who are trying to stop using drugs and alcohol. Tell each one that he or she is a child of God.
- Set up a youth hotline.
- Stress the position of the Christian faith and the church's position, such as the statement on "drug and alcohol concerns" in the United Methodist "Book of Resolutions."
- Give youths an alternative to drugs, alcohol and violence. "Give them God."

ATLANTA—The Rev. H. Ward Greer, pastor of Cory United Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, prays with a young person during an interdenominational youth rally at Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Atlanta. The service was part of a recent Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on Drugs, Alcohol and Violence.

Youth attending the Pan-Methodist convocation also asked Bishops Felton E. May (Harrisburg Area) and Ernest A. Fitzgerald (North Georgia Area) to:

1. Negotiate with annual conference leaders to help youths form local organizations which youths can designate as "Being Our Neighbor's Neighbor."

This organization would help youths sponsor similar convocations, "spread the word of God" and help others stay away from drugs, alcohol and violence.

2. "Speak to their colleagues" in the Council of Bishops to let them know that these youths are ready to take action.

They said, "We are willing to do the work of God and are willing to help."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Stepped-up prison ministry proposed

United Methodist News Service

After Chuck Wilson finished a Sunday School class series on prison ministry at First United Methodist Church in Kalamazoo, Mich., he was left wondering, "Where do United Methodists fit into prison ministry on a national level?"

His question eventually led to his participation on the United Methodist Interagency Committee on Prison Ministry/Prison Reform, which recently made its recommendations for consideration by the 1992 General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body.

Those recommendations include:

- Providing leadership to help develop more effective prison ministries;
- Inviting prison chaplains to share information and experiences during annual conference sessions;
- Involving district superintendents and conference council directors in annual visits to jails and prisons;
- Distributing surplus materials and devotional resources in prisons;
- Developing a resource packet and study document;
- Continuing the interagency committee.

Because one of his family members had been sentenced to prison, Mr. Wilson was aware of the lack of ministry.

"My visits to him showed me there was no United Methodist involvement in our area," he said.

He wrote to the denomination's General Council on Ministries (GCOM) and other churchwide program agencies, requesting names of contact persons and the budgets allotted for this ministry.

"I sort of came to the conclusion that all four (program) boards were somewhat involved, but no one person was really focused on prison ministry," he added.

The 1988 General Conference approved a resolution calling on bishops and cabinet members to visit jails and prisons in their areas and on churchwide agencies to develop resources and training on prison ministries for local churches and annual conferences. The general ministries council was asked to coordinate these efforts.

Jewish-Christian partnership?

Theologian recommends end of efforts to convert Jewish people

By STEVE RODAN
Religious News Service

JERUSALEM—A prominent British theologian has urged evangelical Christians to abandon missionary activities directed toward the Jews.

Instead, said Dr. Margaret Brearley, Christians should enter into a partnership with the Jewish people based on what she termed "true love."

Dr. Brearley, a member of the Anglican Church, said such a move would help save Christianity from disintegrating.

"It is in the realm of spirituality that we need our Jewish brethren the most," she said.

Dr. Brearley was speaking to about 200 fundamentalist Christians at the Feast of the Tabernacles, sponsored by the International Christian Embassy. The pilgrimage drew close to 5,000 who arrived in Jerusalem to express their support of Israel.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

JERUSALEM—Nearly 5,000 fundamentalist Christians from 75 countries went to Israel recently for the 12th annual Christian Feast of Tabernacles. One speaker recommended that Christians abandon efforts to convert Jewish people.

Paints bleak picture

Dr. Brearley, a graduate of both Oxford and Cambridge, painted a bleak picture of modern Christianity. She said the religion is being torn by pagan and Eastern influences represented by those promoting so-called New Age Christianity.

"Christians are relying more and more on intuition," Dr. Brearley said, "on their own psyche, rather than on the word of God. Where is the humility, the suffering?"

Dr. Brearley said Jews could serve as an example to Christians on religion based on serving God rather than man or the environment. She pointed to the Bible-based belief of Jews and their focus on God.

For example, Dr. Brearley urged Christians to visit synagogues and even fast with Jews on their Yom Kippur holiday. Another suggestion was that Christians study the weekly portion of the Old Testament read by Jews in synagogue.

But she urged that the evangelicals first abandon mission directed to Jews. She said Jews have too often been befriended by Christians only to learn that the Christians' real aim was to convert them.

She said that Christian groups from the United States and Western Europe have distributed hundreds of thousands of New Testaments to Soviet Jews.

'Let us be frank'

"Let us be frank," Dr. Brearley told the audience. "Many Christian supporters of Israel are here because they want to convert Jews. We shall need to convince the Jewish people of our utter sincerity and convictions," she said.

The audience appeared receptive to Dr. Brearley's call. Some of them asked how they should behave in synagogue. Another asked whether there is any publication that can relieve the Christian obligation to proselytize. Yet another inquired of the Jewish view of Jesus.

A leading interfaith activist attending the seminar, Bernard Resnikoff, retired president of the American Jewish Committee, told Dr. Brearly, "What you're doing here is turning Jewish-Christian relations by 180 degrees. You just have to know you're not going to please everyone."

Dr. Brearley stressed that she is a passionate Christian who wants to help keep her religion strong.

"I am not advocating that Christians adopt Judaism," she said. "But let us fulfill the words of Isaiah. Jews need our unstinting support and courage."

A candid and powerful portrait, "Moyers/Circle of Recovery," a 60-minute special Oct. 23 on PBS, is a look at one group of people helping each other heal wounds of addiction.

Review

Moyers looks into circle of black men's self-help

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-anon, and similar "12-step" groups have been meeting in church basements across the nation for decades, yet the church has seldom reflected on what it might learn from such support groups—or what we might be able to teach them.

Bill Moyers, a Baptist preacher turned television journalist, has devoted nearly all of his recent programs for PBS on some aspect of faith or masculinity.

Now, with "Moyers/Circle of Recovery" he looks at a group of black men who are helping each other recover from addiction.

Friends meet on Sundays

Mr. Moyers visits a drug-and-alcohol counselor in Northern California and a group of his friends who meet every Sunday evening to share their struggles on the road to recovery.

All have benefited from more traditional programs such as AA and Narcotics Anonymous, but all have found that they also need something beyond what "12-step" groups provide.

Much like Alcoholics Anonymous and its kin, theirs is a group formed around the common realization that they had made a mess out of their lives and that they needed God's help and the help of other recovering addicts to find healing and self-worth.

"Recovery," the counselor says, "doesn't happen in isolation."

These gatherings are times of honesty and hugs, tears and laughter—most of which are all too rare among men or in church buildings.

As is the case in AA or Narcotics Anonymous, those farther along in recovery tell more-newly-sober addicts how they have managed to stay straight "one day at a time."

And like other "12-step groups," their Sunday night gatherings have a quietly stated emphasis on spiritual growth. They may swear at times—but they also casually share what a gospel hymn has taught them.

Where this group differs from the more traditional ones is that here they give each other feedback and suggestions and enter into dialogue with each other.

We hear, for example, some moving conversation about their absent fathers and their own struggles and joys as fathers.

Talk openly and deeply

Theirs is also an all-male, all-black group, and they manage to talk, with real depth and openness, about the women in their lives, the way racism wounds them, and their feelings of rage and powerlessness, and the joy they find in becoming able to work dependably and help other addicts.

You can see "Moyers/Circle of Recovery" at 9 p.m. EST Oct. 23 on most public broadcasting stations (check local listings.)

It is one of the liveliest and most inspiring programs this broadcaster has produced in a long and distinguished career.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

Interfaith leaders decry U.S. efforts against drugs, offer alternative plan

By DARRELL TURNER
Religious News Service

NEW YORK—Organizers of a national interfaith campaign designed to offer an alternative to the U.S. government's "war on drugs" said recently that not only have federal policies not helped to stem the epidemic, they have contributed to it in several ways.

"The policies of President Bush and his administration are the major drug distributors in this country," charged Archdeacon Michael S. Kendall of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

Covert policies?

He said there is evidence that the influx of drugs into the United States is "related directly to the covert policies that the nation has in other parts of the world."

Archdeacon Kendall and officials of the Christic Institute in Washington, a sponsor of the interfaith effort, charged the administration with targeting drug users and sellers in its anti-drug program while largely ignoring national and international distribution networks and not providing adequate funding for drug treatment programs.

The site chosen for the press conference to announce the interfaith program, Webb Plaza in Harlem, had once been infested with drugs and violence. Now it is largely rid of such problems through the efforts of Rita Webb Smith, whose 21-year-old son was shot in the face by a drug peddler in 1979.

Not only did Ms. Smith help police track down the assailant and obtain evidence leading to his 25-year jail sentence, she helped other residents of the neighborhood establish a development company to renovate 700 low- and middle-income units in buildings and a 10-square-block-area.

Ms. Smith, who has told her story in a book titled "The Woman Who Took Back Her Streets," said a national effort is needed to combat the drug problem because "there's nobody in this country that's not touched by it."

Closed 15 crack houses

Imam Siraj Wahaj, spiritual leader of the At-Taqwa mosque in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn, related how in January 1988, the Muslim community in his neighborhood worked with the police to close down 15 crack houses. Although the houses are still closed three years later, he said, such action needs to be taken on every block in the country that faces drug problems.

The Rev. Erik Kolbell, minister for peace and social justice at Riverside Church in New York City, said the new effort will call on religious institutions and grassroots organizations to "lead a spiritual revitalization . . . that calls our government to task for its failure to address the serious, systemic factors that led to the drug era.

"If the government thinks that all that religious institutions do is to make proclamations, they'd better watch out," Mr. Kolbell said. He called for "the kind of audacity that's necessary to reclaim the streets and the spirits of the people."

Dear Deborah

What about my obnoxious son?

Dear Deborah:

I am writing about my son, Benjy, who is 5 going on 50. He is the most obnoxious misogynist I have met.

My husband and I, our two older daughters and Benjy live with my husband's parents. My husband and father-in-law are also misogynists—abusive verbally, socially and financially—and of course that is where Benjy gets it.

However, Benjy is also insolent behind their backs and cruel with his sisters and me. The family does not believe me, and our daughters are afraid to defend themselves.

What will happen as Benjy gets older and starts in school?

Rachel

Dear Rachel:

You are indeed right to sense trouble ahead.

I wonder if you, like your daughters, also are behaving like a victim?

If not, why do you stay in such a situation? There are family shelters where abused women and children can get help making a new start and protection if they need it.

You need counseling to learn how to stop your victim behavior and to teach that to your daughters as well.

I think if you can learn to stop your victim behavior and get your children out of that situation, you might be in a position to address the issues in your marriage, if you have a desire to save it.

If you can find a STEP training course (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) I think you can find some understanding and resources to help both your daughters and Benjy.

But when he gets to school, if he behaves this way, don't be surprised if the school wants him to get counseling, too.

I believe that Jesus empowers people to stand up to injustice and wrong and that you and your daughters can find strength for the hard journey ahead and that then you all will be able to help Benjy find a more healthy way of relating with women as he grows up.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Priest forgives his maimers

Religious News Service

CALGARY, Alberta—A year after he lost both hands and one eye in the explosion of a mail bomb, the Rev. Michael Lapsley says he views his condition as symbolic of southern Africa, where he has fought racism for almost two decades.

In April 1990 a package marked "religious books from South Africa" exploded in the 42-year-old Anglican priest's hands at his home in Harare, Zimbabwe, where he has lived since being expelled from South Africa 15 years ago.

During the past year, Mr. Lapsley said, he has forgiven the people who maimed him and he has been bolstered by the prayers of people around the world. He said their support helped to make the bombing redemptive—bringing life out of death and good out of evil.

One political effect the bombing had, Mr. Lapsley said, is that "there were people in the international community who had not been totally convinced that apartheid is evil. They became convinced because of what happened to me."

History of Hymns

Spirit bid: 'Come sweeping through us'

O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
Revive your church with life and pow'r.
Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us,
And fit your church to meet this hour.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

The hymn expressing a yearning for the Holy Spirit to "come sweeping through us," was written by Elizabeth "Bessie" Porter Head and first appeared in a collection of poems she published in 1920.

Born in Norfolk, England, in 1850, she became interested in missionary endeavors and served in the South Africa General Mission, working at Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.

There she met Albert Alfred Head, a Christian layman who was active in his support of the South Africa General Mission. Head and Bessie, as she was known, had a common interest in missions.

Although he was a successful insurance broker attached to a family firm in England, he spent much time in mission activity.

He also served for several years as chairman of the Keswick Convention, and the Heads regularly attended these annual meetings of Christians who sought a higher level of Christian life.

The desire for the presence of the Holy Spirit is evident in Mrs. Head's hymn, for the first three stanzas are addressed to the Holy Spirit as "O Breath of Life," "O wind of God," "O Breath of Love."

Her zeal for evangelical missions is seen in the concluding stanza:

Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating
While harvest fields are vast and white?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,
Equip thy church to spread the light.

This hymn, along with several others from Mrs. Head, were included in the Keswick Hymnal of 1937, the year following her death.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"God of Love and God of Power"

Review

Whimsical fables bear their multiple warnings

Friedman's Fables by Edwin H. Friedman. New York: The Guilford Press, 1990. 211 pages plus a 29-page booklet of discussion questions.

By LOGAN JONES

Warning: This book will make you think about yourself, your family, your marriage, your parenting, your place of work, and your church. Beware.

The fable is alive and well as Friedman weaves these whimsical tales of animals and people struggling with the ancient problem of the human condition.

In these fables you will encounter birds, lambs, tigers, moths, spiders and even human beings.

You will probably see yourself and your significant relationships in these characters.

As a companion to his highly successful "Generation to Generation," Mr. Friedman here continues to explore the depths of systems—family and otherwise—where we all live and move and have our being.

The power of these fables is the chance to gain new insight into old problems and attitudes such as unhealthy helping behavior, burnout, perfectionism, change and resistance to change.

The central thesis underlying the book is that communication is an emotional process which depends upon the relationships involved, not how articulate or how loudly one can speak. Mr. Friedman's purpose is for these fables to shatter some of our illusions about communication in relationships such as:

- "Communication is a cerebral phenomenon rather than an emotional process;
- "Insight will work with people who are motivated to change;
- "Resistance to your message can be overcome by trying harder;
- "Seriousness is deeper than playfulness."

This is a playful book. It is mischievous and, at times, quite disturbing.

You may discover things about yourself, your family, your marriage, your parenting, your place of work or even your church that you may not like.

Yet, underneath the playfulness lies care and compassion for each person and awe at the power of the family, marriage, children and relationships to provide strength and healing.

Read the book. Ponder it. Struggle with it. Use it in Sunday School or discussion groups. You might even be reminded of a parable or two.

Mr. Jones is associate director, department of pastoral care, Methodist Medical Center, Dallas.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVING MINISTRIES

Boy Scouts Of America

"Does your church have a Scouting unit?"

Does your answer to that question sound like this?

"Do we? You bet! And we're touching tbe lives of many youth, parents, and families with our Scouting ministry. Exciting things are happening, because . . ."

Or like tbis?

"Oh, they're the boys who use our building on Thursday night. They get it so dirty . . . and sometimes they break things. We've thought about asking them to leave, but . . ."

Churches who have discovered the opportunities to expand their educational ministries witb the Scouting program know that they are offering more than space, time, and sometimes an adult leader; tbey're offering a variety of ministries, including:

. . . A DISTINCTIVE RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS

. . . RECOGNITION OF GOD AND COUNTRY PROGRAMS

. . . RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

. . . ECUMENICAL EXPERIENCES

. . . OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES TO THE UNCHURCHED

. . . OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY-ENRICHING EXPERIENCES

. . . PEER GROUP EXPERIENCES

. . . ADULT LEADERS AS MODELS

. . . MORAL CHARACTER TRAINING

. . . EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

. . . A MEASUREMENT OF GROWTH

. . . RECOGNITION OF WORTH

. . . DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM

. . . DEVELOPMENT OF USEFUL SKILLS

. . . OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

. . . VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION OPPORTUNITIES

. . . AVOCATIONAL EXPLORATION OPPORTUNITIES

. . . LEADERSHIP TRAINING EXPERIENCES

. . . EXPERIENCES FOR IMPROVING SELF-DISCIPLINE

. . . A CORPS OF HELPERS FOR THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

. . . AN EMERGENCY-PREPAREDNESS CORPS

. . . ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

. . . AND THERE ARE OTHER MINISTRIES

THE UNITED METHODIST BISHOP'S DINNER FOR YOUTH SERVING MINISTRIES will be held in each district at least once every five years, beginning with Lake Cbarles District, November 10, 1991. At this dinner tbe Bishop urges each church to start and continue units of each Youth Serving Ministry — Boy Scouts of America. Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Camp Fire, and 4-H — as stated in the Book of Discipline (1219.3).

These units are a great way to reach the unchurched and bring them into our cburch families. The United Methodist Men accept the opportunity and challenge to assume the responsibility for the support and promotion of the Scouting program as a resource for the church's ministry for and with young people and their families, and as a viable and meaningful adult volunteer ministry consistent with Christian discipleship.

N.A.U.M.S.

Purpose

The purpose of the National Association of United Methodist Scouters is to enhance the ministry of The United Methodist Church; to develop strategies and resources; and to organize and expand the church's youth ministry by utilizing the resources of the General Board of Discipleship and the programs of the four youth agencies: Girl Scouts USA, Camp-Fire, 4-H, and Boy Scouts of America.

Through youtb agencies and church partnerships, the Association has undertaken the mission of providing character and citizenship development under the leadership of Christian role models.

Membership

Membership is open to people who have an interest in providing quality programs for today's youth through Scouting programs within The United Methodist Church.

There is an annual fee of $10 and a Life Membership of $150.

All funds received through membership fees are used for program development and support.

Members receive "SCOUTING NEWS," a bi-monthly publication containing information related to Scouting in United Methodist Churches across the country.

Membership Application
National Association Of United Methodist Scouters

☐ NEW
☐ RENEWAL

☐ Annual Fee $10.00
☐ Annual Fee + NAUMS Patch $15.00
☐ Life Member $150.00

Name _____ Telephone ( ) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Position _____ Cburch _____

District _____ Conf. _____

Scouting Position _____ Council _____

Enclosed is my fee of $10.00 for membership in the National Association of United Methodist Scouters

Mail to: National Association United Methodist Scouters, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202

Girl Scouts Of The U.S.A.

The larger vision that guides the United Methodist Church's planning and programs for youth ministry is to create a climate of invitation and support for bonding relationships between youth and God, youth and their peers, youth and others in the congregation, and youth and the larger community. We are aware, more than ever, that the congregation exists in the context of a community, in which there are a variety of youth serving agencies that share these same goals.

One such agency with which tbe United Methodist Church has maintained a cooperative relationship for many years is Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. Girl Scouting has a long and respected history of serving girls tbrough a spiritually motivated program committed to values building, character development, and service to others.

Because the Girl Scout program fosters many goals also promoted by the United Methodist Church for its youth, we endorse and support Girl Scouting as an excellent vehicle for carrying out our youth ministry program for girls.

By building on this longstanding, cooperative relationship, congregations will be better able to serve girls and to reach out to the larger community. They will be provided with an added opportunity to bring girls into an environment that fosters spiritual and moral values and develops the ability to transfer these values to life situations.

Often, the leadership skills developed by adult and girl church members through Girl Scouting are also helpful in other areas of the congregation's ministry and provide support to the efforts to involve more youth in appropriate ways in the decision-making and planning processes of the church.

The Board of Discipleship of tbe United Methodist Churcb encourages the use of the structure and settings of other youth serving agencies to provide opportunities for growth and service for our young people.

I would, tberefore, personally urge each congregation to explore these exciting possibilities made available to the church by incorporating Girl Scouting as part of the congregation's Youth Ministry Program.

Dr. Ezra Earl Jones
General Secretary
Board of Discipleship

4-H

The primary purpose of 4-H is to develop boys and girls into useful citizens. Four-H joins the bome, the school, the church and the community in this purpose. The 4-H program provides ideals and training in skills, leadership and citizenship. Its members "learn by doing" to develop their minds, to do useful work, to give loyal service to their fellow man and to God, and to form habits that will develop healthy minds and bodies.

Four-H club are groups of young people in urban, suburban and rural areas between the ages of 9 and 19, pledged to improving their heads, hearts, hands and health. A member must select and complete one or more projects a year and agree to follow 4-H ideals and standards. The main requirement is a willingness to "learn by doing," the club slogan, and "to make the best better," the club motto.

District Coordinators

ACADIANA DISTRICT
Linda Boswell
3934 Walnut Dr.
Opelousas, LA 70570
Beverly Langford
101 Live Oak Blvd. Lafayette, LA 70503

ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT
Bill Gates
3219 Crestview
Pineville, LA 71301

BATON ROUGE DISTRICT
David Phillips
3825 Robert
Zachary, LA 70791
Don Shelmire
5486 San Juan
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1900 Island Dr.
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William Dicken
2061 Vineyard Lane
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NORTH SHORE DISTRICT
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Harris
38374 Reiniger Rd.
Denham Springs, LA 70726

RUSTON DISTRICT
Jimmy Rogers
908 Park Hwy.
Minden, LA 71055
James and Loretta Owens
P.O. Drawer 1
Ruston, LA 71270

SHREVEPORT DISTRICT
Ray Owens
846 E. River Rd.
Shreveport, LA 71105

UNITED METHODIST MEN'S REPRESENTATIVE
Charles Thomas
7081 Modesto Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70811

AT LARGE
Rev. Ray Holt
423 Live Oak St.
Sulphur, LA 70663

CONFERENCE COORDINATOR
Douglas T. Smith (318) 747-0762
Rt. 1, Box 428-B
Bossier City, LA 71112

Camp Fire

Philosophy. To help youth realize their potential, Camp Fire has set forth three overall program goals; self-development, skill development and social development.

As young people gain confidence and pride in themselves, they also learn to appreciate others as unique individuals. Camp Fire encourages members to develop and practice their own spiritual and ethical values and beliefs and to respect those of others.

Through Camp Fire activities, members become more skilled at planning, making decisions, solving problems and taking responsibility. They learn skills for everyday living as well as skills related to their specific interests.

In a Camp Fire small group setting, members learn by doing as they work and play together. Through Camp Fire service projects, they become responsible citizens concerned about tbe communities in which they live and society at large.

The Camp Fire Law

- Worship God
- Seek Beauty
- Give Service
- Pursue Knowledge
- Be Trustworthy
- Hold on to Health
- Glorify Work
- Be Happy

To improve conditions in society which affect youth, Camp Fire attempts to influence public policies, legislation and regulations wbich affect young people. Often in collaboration with other agencies, Camp Fire speaks out on issues sucb as child abuse, youth employment, juvenile justice and child care.

ALL are welcome in Camp Fire Boys & Girls! Youth Kindergarten through 12th grade are encouraged to participate in the Camp Fire adventure! We teach leadership, communication skills, creative arts, outdoor living skills, self-reliance, social skills and the importance of goal-setting. Our programs also teach boys and girls how to appreciate, enjoy and protect their environment through a variety of outdoor adventures. Camp Fire encourages self-confidence and responsibility.

TODAY'S CAMP FIRE FOR TODAY'S KIDS!

This award is presented by the Bishop to the Pastor, group leader and one member of the group at Annual Conference.

BISHOP'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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A Day for the Ordinary Christian

The word "saints" has come to mean many things in our day: A football team that has gone from bad to mediocre to very good; persons who lived such extraordinary lives that they have been declared "saint" by segments of Christianity; extraordinary persons who are known for their goodness and who will go "marching in" to a glorious reward. The Hebrew word for saint, *gaddish,* means "set apart and very holy."

But none of these definitions capture the Biblical meaning of the word. The Greek word for saints is *haggios.* Paul uses the word often in his epistles, such as for the "poor saints which are in Jerusalem" (Romans 15:26). He also never uses saint in the singular. It is always in the plural except in one place in Philippians where he speaks of "greeting each and every saint." For Paul, the meaning of "Saints" is very simply "the good folk in Jesus Christ." By the term, he means all those persons who struggle daily with the tensions and turmoil in life, who laugh and cry, who eat and sleep, who work and play and who constantly live with the over-arching question, "What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and a member of his Church?"

Friday, November 1, is All Saints Day. It is the day Martin Luther chose to nail his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, and it is also the day when ordinary Christians like you and me affirm that the Christian life is the highest possible calling even though we do not always fulfill it. Still, we uphold each other on the journey together.

William B. Oden

November Conference Calendar

United Methodist Women Local Elected Leaders Training in Each District

1	Church Women United, World Community Day
3-8	Council of Bishops, Lake Junaluska, NC
8-9	Workshop for the Local Church and Persons with Handicapping Conditions, University Church, Lake Charles (4:00 o.m. on 8th-3:30 p.m. on 9th)
8-10	CCYM Junior High Retreat (7th and 8th Grades) Tall Timbers
10-11	Shepherd's Visit — Lake Charles District
9-12	Church Women United Jubilee Assembly, St. Louis
15	Jurisdictional Council on Ministries Little Rock, Arkansas
15	United Methodist Men's 1992 Retreat Planning Group Baton Rouge
16-18	Shepherd's Visit — New Orleans District
16-19	UMW Quadrennial Conference for National Mission Institutions, E. Rutherford, NJ
18	LIC Executive Committee, Headquarters Building, 2:00 p.m.
19	Legislative Liaison Committee, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.
20-21	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 9:00 a.m.
22	Conference Worship Committee, Headquarters Building, 10:00 a.m.
29-30	United Nations Seminar, Washington, D.C. 11th-12th grade youth
24	United Methodist Student Day
23-26	Shepherd's Visit — Baton Rouge District

Centennial Celebration

The New Iberia First United Methodist Church Sanctuary Centennial Celebration will be held on Sunday, October 27, 1991. A special service will be held at 10:30 a.m. that morning honoring past ministers and their families along with all those who have been a part of the church throughout the years. All friends and former members are invited to participate in the celebration. Members of the Centennial Celebration Committee pictured above are: Front row, l. to r., the Rev. Hugh Baker, minister; Mrs. Clem Fox, chairperson; and Mrs. Marion Gray. Second row: Mr. Sam White, Mrs. Brenda Rutherford, Mrs. Inita Segura. Third row: Mr. Donnie McLeod and Mrs. Kay Hester.

Bishop Oden Presents Symbol of his Russian Trip to Louisiana Conference

Bishop William B. Oden presented a brightly-colored wooden egg, that he and Mrs. Oden brought from Russia, to Conference Lay Leader Paul White at the Conference Council on Ministries' fall planning retreat held October 4-5 at Dillard University.

The egg, according to Bishop Oden, symbolizes the "hope of the Conference Council on Ministries as we move toward Vision 2000." It represents the "spirit — the process at the heart of the life of the Church — that [he] saw in Russia and Estonia." The Louisiana Conference's plan of action for the next quadrennium is still in incubation. It is still being born as our dreams of the past become manifest in our vision for the future.

The egg is on display at the United Methodist Building, Louisiana Area, in Baton Rouge.

Bishop Oden (left) presents Russian egg to conference lay leader Paul White.

David Brazelton Leads CCOM Planning Retreat

The Rev. David Brazelton, director of the General Board Discipleship's section on evangelism, led the fall retreat of the Conference Council on Ministries, October 4-5, at Dillard University. The retreat was held to plan the direction of the Vision 2000 initiative in the coming quadrennium. The plan of action will be presented to the 1992 Annual Conference for approval.

Around the Conference

The Northeast University Campus Ministry is continuing its weekly luncheon series. The public is invited to attend the Wednesday sessions which begin at 12 noon and end promptly at 12:50 p.m. They are held at the Campus Ministry Center located at 112 Delano Drive, next to Strauss Hall. Hot meals prepared by area church women's groups are provided at a cost of one dollar.

Future topics include a discussion of the voucher system, "Police Needs and Individual Rights," and "24 Hour Religion or Practical Atheism." For more information, call the Rev. James E. Wilson at 313-343-2944 or 345-0181.

The Gonzales United Methodist Church celebrated members' birthday with one large birthday party last May. Twelve table chairpersons provided decorations and arranged a skit representing each birthday month. Mrs. Shirley Jacocks, Family Life Chairperson and Assistant Chairperson Mrs. Brenda Walker, coordinated the event. Pictured presenting their skits are: l. to r., Mrs. Wendy Jacocks, the Rev. Ken Jacocks, Miss Melissa Pritchard, Mr. Glen Cambre, Mr. Ron Kuntz and Mrs. Gail Beall. At the microphone is Mrs. Helen Mahfouz. The Rev. Ken Jacocks is the pastor.

The members of Rayville United Methodist Church had a Groundbreaking Ceremony for their Family Life Center on June 30th. From left are Mr. Fred Scott Franklin, building committee member; Mr. George Gladney, Jr., chairperson of the committee; Mr. James Craig and Mrs. Marie Cuthbert, both committee members; Monroe District Superintendent Dr. Phil Woodland; the Rev. Frank M Jones, pastor; Mrs. Carol Mulhern and Mr. Walter Cochran, committee members.

The members of Harmony Chapel United Methodist Church in Dubach recently dedicated a ramp for the handicapped and a covered walkway for their church. The additions were financed by the congregation and the Ruston District Board of Health and Welfare. The Rev. L. Alton Peel is Harmony's pastor.

Best Wishes

The Rev. Melissa Draper and Mr. Mark Plunkett were married October 12 at Walker United Methodist Church.

Saint Paul UMC Craft Fair

Handcrafters of St. Paul's United Methodist Church at 6500 Jefferson Highway in Harahan have been busy all year preparing for their Annual Craft Fair. The fair will be open on Friday, Nov. 1st from 1-7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 2nd from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Many beautiful handmade articles will be for sale. Jambalaya, red beans and rice, hot dogs and drinks may be purchased there to eat or baked goods may be purchased to take home.

Everyone is invited to come. Parking is available in front of the church or behind the building on Crislaur Street.

Reminder. . .Reminder. . .Reminder. . .

NOVEMBER 8 & 9 is the date for the DISABILITIES SEMINAR sponsored by the Conference Committee on Meeting the Needs of Persons With Handicapping Conditions, at University United Methodist Church, 3501 Patrick Street, Lake Charles, LA. For more information, contact your District Superintendent's office. To register your attendance, mail your $10.00 check (made payable to University United Methodist Church) to Mrs. Sarabeth Atkins, Rt. 3 Box 67-5, Dubach, LA 71235. Please indicate needs for braille, signing or wheelchar accessibility.

Editorial

A way to discern God's will

One wouldn't expect the church's hureaucracy to provide many prime examples of how local congregations should function.

A refreshing exception occurred during a recent meeting of our denomination's top ecumenical agency.

As part of its regular agenda, hoard members of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concems invited their guests to critique the commission (see UMR, Oct. 18).

What followed included both commendation and criticism. For example, one guest praised the competence of commission memhers. But he also urged them to get more in touch with the realities of a local church Sunday school class.

"There's a lot to he said for just listening to what goes on," he said.

Good advice, we helieve, that's equally valuahle for and readily usahle hy local churches.

Namely, rather than passively assuming that visitors feel welcome and at home in our congregation, we should try to get people to critique their experience of our congregational life and work.

Asking for negative as well as positive feedhack can be threatening, hut it is the most effective means we know of building on strengths and overcoming weaknesses.

It also is thoroughly in tune with our religious tradition. Indeed, the "Protestant principle" is that the church is in constant need of reform and renewal. That occurs through an ongoing openness to critique of our ever-imperfect life together against biblical standards.

It's tempting, of course, for both congregations and individual Christians to avoid honest, objective evaluation. Unfavorable "marks" can be painful. But candid feedback offers the most effective means we know of building on strengths and overcoming weaknesses.

Jesus lived in the full light of truth even when doing so was uncomfortable and hurtful. And he commanded his followers to do likewise (Luke 14:27).

Prayer and Bible study are two important ways for us to discern God's will. Another way is through listening to the voices of fellow Christians "tell it like it is."

Here are several proven methods for evoking such feedhack:

✓ Provide "report cards" in the pews that can be filled out and placed in the offering plate.

✓ Supply one or more "suggestion boxes" throughout the church and regularly invite people to use them.

✓ Hold congregational "town meetings" from time to time, that is, open forums to evaluate specific aspects of your church's ministry.

Incidentally—how do you think we at the Reporter are doing in telling the church's story and providing the church's memhers with an ongoing forum for expressing their views and concerns?

Here I Stand

Would we feel welcome at your church?

By TIMOTHY J. SMITH

This summer my family and I visited a United Methodist church while we were on vacation.

We arrived as the service was starting. Ushers were ready to help us find seats. Another usher handed each of my children, ages 6 and 3, a children's bulletin. We sat near the back of the church.

The church was a beautiful modem building. We first spotted it as we arrived in town and came back on Sunday to worship. Both the interior and exterior were well kept and very clean. The Sunday we visited the sanctuary was filled.

The choir anthem and responses were extraordinary. The sermon was excellent. It was evident that much time went into planning this worship service. The hymns went along with the theme of the day. When the service was over we were glad that we had chosen this church to worship in.

However, as we made our way toward the main exit we were amazed that not one person welcomed us. The man sitting in the pew next to us holted out a side door the moment the service was over without even looking at us.

And, as we edged our way toward the door, standing in line, not one person spoke to us. Not one person asked if we were new to the community. Not one person asked if we were just visiting on vacation.

When we got to the door the pastor was very warm and friendly. He went out of his way to greet our children, making small talk with each one. He shook my hand and out we went. Still no one from the church bothered to talk to us.

It wasn't until we were getting into our car when a husband and wife who parked next to us spoke to us. The man saw our out-of-state license plate. They were very nice and welcomed us. We told them we were on vacation and just visiting for the day.

As we were driving away, I said to my wife, "That's a church that doesn't want to grow." She agreed. We expected people to be warm and friendly. We thought the people would he glad to see a young family worshipping at their church.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. Timothy J. Smith is minister of St. Peter's United Methodist Church in Saylorsburg, Pa. (Eastern Pennsylvania conference).

We thought at least someone would have said hello to us. But, with the one late exception, not one person did.

When we don't make an effort to say hello and to make new people feel welcome in our churches, they leaving thinking, "They really don't want us to come back."

People who sit in the pews each week must be willing to make the extra effort to welcome strangers in their midst. We have to invite newcomers back to worship. We have to say things like, "It's good to see you" and "I'm glad you're worshipping with us."

What would happen if my family and I attended your church this Sunday? Would we he invited to return to worship? Or would we feel like outsiders who didn't belong?

Would we feel welcomed?

Pontius' Puddle

Letters to the Editor

I wish the Bible had more to teach us about heaven!

In the Sept. 27 issue you printed an interesting article headlined, "What will heaven he like? Famous, not-so-famous answer."

Isn't it strange that the Bible is so vague and lacking in direction on the important subject of heaven that there are no answers, and that any conception one may have is beyond argument? This leaves me to wonder if there is a place we can call heaven inasmuch as the Bihle makes little if any mention of it or its importance.

I would like to have the comfort of helieving without a douht that I shall, upon my demise, be reunited in spirit with loved ones who have gone ahead, hut where does the Bihle give this assurance?

I haven't found many United Methodists who believe in life after death hut many who would like to if they had something from the Bible to hack up their faith.

Jeanne H. Gunderson
St. Louis, Missouri

Women are in control

The Oct. 11 article headlined, "Most churches have male lay leaders," showed that males outnumher females on three of 14 committees and that seven of the 14 committees most often have male chairpersons.

However, women are represented hy the powerhouse Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and hy the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. In comparison, the Division of United Methodist Men of the General Board of Discipleship has a much smaller staff and far less influence.

Even considering that most ministers are men, women control the local churches.

Richard Locke
Evanston, Illinois

Bible, 'choice' discussed

I would like to share my reaction to the Sept. 27 article headlined, "Why abortion debate centers on choice," hy Eugene C. Kennedy.

Dr. Kennedy states that "Women who battle for choice may be arguing not so much for ahortion as against the inconsistency of men who . . . come across as smugly trying to control their lives."

My question is, "Why is our church, and particularly our church newspaper, silent ahout the bihlical perspective on the issue of choice?"

Granted, women have gotten a raw deal in many respects. And I would also champion their right of choice. But our personal rights end where another's hegins (namely the rights of the unborn).

We have the right to make choices, but we do not have the right to choose the consequences of our choices. Scripture tell us that God holds us accountable for our choices. Instead of helping people to avoid the consequences of their behavior, should we not he helping them to make hetter choices in the first place?

John Fullmer
Moline, Illinois

Headline was right

The Reporter stated in a Sept. 13 headline that "Wichita United Methodists assert 'no easy answers' on abortion."

This is true. Neither was there an easy answer to the prohlem of slavery in the last century. It took a civil war to resolve it. There was no easy answer to the slaughter of Jews under the National Socialist Party in Germany. It ended only after a hloody world war.

The article on Wichita makes it appear that the problem to be resolved is polarization. "Religious Leaders for Choice" apparently has no interest in facing the real prob-lem, which is the destruction of small human children.

When the war on children is over, we should not he surprised if the church is stigmatized for decades or even centuries.

R. G. McMillan
Concord, Tennessee

Church affiliation righted

In the Oct. 4 "Faith Connections" it is mentioned that the Rev. Fred Craddock is a noted Presbyterian preaching authority.

I believe that Dr. Craddock is still a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

J. Mark Spiegel
Lakeland, Florida

EDITOR'S NOTE: You are correct. The Reporter regrets the error.

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"There is one hody and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one haptism, one God and father of us all, who is ahove all and through all and in all." (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: John 15:7)

Readings for week of Oct. 28

Monday: Psalms 126
Tuesday: Psalms 127
Wednesday: Jeremiah 31:1-6
Thursday: Jeremiah 31:7-9
Friday: Mark 10:46-52
Saturday: Mark 11:20-25
Sunday: Hehrews 5:1-6

My Witness

A rural church and things that endure

By JANET TERRY

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Janet Terry is a member of Farmers Chapel United Methodist Church in Danville, Ill. (Central Illinois Annual Conference).

It seemed almost historic, like a scene from an old movie. Or mayhe it was the vivid imagery of Thomas Gray's, "Elegy Written In A Country Churchyard," that passed through my thoughts at the moment.

I watched in silent reflection as people gathered at the cemetery next to my small, rural church. The cemetery is rarely used these days. But a crowd was gathered to commend one to her grave.

The floral donations were grand and contrasting to the crumbling hricks and old, tilted stones. Nature, in perpetual care, offered floral donations of her own.

It was only a week later that I witnessed a marriage in another country church. This steepled, white clapboard structure rose ahove comfields while a brass ensemble from a nearhy university played Pachelhel and Beethoven with lingering perfection.

These moments were pervasive. The buildings attest to celebrations of living and values carried forward. Their weathered forms speak of endurance.

As The United Methodist Church's 1992 General Conference approaches, I hope that our representation can prayerfully consider the values that likewise have endured.

But I also hope that we are wise enough to distinguish between thoughtless idealism and sound values. I pray for compassion for human weakness and a clear vision of what is indeed prejudice and bigotry.

I hope our delegates do what can he done. At the same time I admire a denomination that attempts to address and re-address difficult issues.

Again, I think of the rural church. Thomas Gray said it well, "Let not ambition mock their useful toil, their homely joys, and destiny obscure . . . the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, await alike the inevitable hour."

Faithfully yours

How many Russians want to 'know God'?

As we were packing our hags to leave the hotel in Ekaterinhurg, Russia, for the three-hour flight to St. Petersburg, a shy knock came on our door.

Spurgeon Dunnam

I opened it to find the elderly cleaning woman with whom I'd exchanged smiles several times during our five-day mission.

She bowed her head low, folded her hands together and said, "I not believer. But I want to teach my grandson to know God. Can you give him Bihle?"

I went down the hall and got one of the illustrated Russian language Bibles that our group had brought to share with children joining Russia's first United Methodist congregation (see UMR, Oct. 4, 11 and 18).

And I asked our lay pastor in the Ekaterinhurg congregation, Lidia Estomina, to come help me visit with the lady.

We learned that she had been trained to he a teacher. But the state had assigned her to do manual work. She had spent most of her life cleaning up for others.

She had never professed a belief in God, yet she believed enough to want her grandson to be exposed to God's Word.

From the beaming smile on her face as I handed her the Bible, you'd have thought that I had given her life's greatest treasure.

Lidia invited the lady to hring her grandson to Sunday School at the new United Methodist Church. She also invited the woman to attend. I wonder if they've come.

And I wonder how many million more "unbelievers" there are in Russia who are just waiting to he offered a word of hope and invited to trust in God?

—SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

Mr. Dunnam is Editor of the Reporter.

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY: Members of the United Methodist General Commission on the Status and Role of Women have proposed a petition to the church's policy-making 1992 General Conference to develop a general policy on sexual harassment. The proposal builds on a recent churchwide study in which clergy and lay women, college and seminary students and non-clergy employees reported unwanted sexual behavior taking place in a variety of circumstances across the church. Commission members also endorsed a plan to begin to eliminate sexual harassment in the denomination and its institutions through intereligious resources; materials for ordained and diaconal persons; and materials and programs for annual conferences. The General Conference adopted a resolution on tbis issue in 1988.

FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA: United Methodist laywoman **Janice Love**, member of the World Council of Churches central committee and assistant professor of government and international studies at the University of South Carolina, will be among a panel of speakers at an international consultation Oct. 26-27 on strategies for U.S. churches regarding future efforts against South African apartheid. She is expected to present a paper on "The Role of the Religious Community in the Struggle." The Rev. **Frank Chikane**, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches will respond to the presentation.

Janice Love

VOLUNTEER HONORED: Eastern Pennsylvania Conference United Metbodist laywoman **Marjorie May** has received the Sargent Shriver Award for Humanitarian Service from the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Mr. Shriver was the first director of tbe Peace Corps. Thousands of returned volunteers were on hand for the recent celebration which commemorated the founding of the Peace Corps by President **John F. Kennedy** in 1961.

RNS STAFF CHANGES: **Pamela Schaeffer**, religion editor of the "St. Louis Post-Dispatch" for 10 years, has been named news editor of Religious News Service. She succeeds **Tom Roberts**, who has been RNS news editor for seven years. Mr. Roberts has been named editor-at-large of the service. He will devote full-time to in-depth coverage of current religious issues. Religious News Service, owned and operated by The United Methodist Reporter (parent publication of The National Christian Reporter), is an interfaith wire service serving some 150 religious publications and national agencies with news, photos and a weekly broadcast script.

TELECONFERENCE SLATED: A national teleconference on drugs, endorsed by the 203rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., has been scheduled for Nov. 7-9. The conference, "Causes and Cures: National Teleconference on the Narcotics Epidemic," will originate at Riverside Church in New York City and will be televised by cable and satellite to more than 100 communities.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Proposed worship book clears Discipleship

Directors OK document despite bishop's final attempt to stop 'God language' options

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—A proposed new book of worship for United Methodists—the first since 1966—was approved by the church's General Board of Discipleship last week, but not without another impassioned challenge to some of its language.

The proposed book now goes to the 1992 General Conference in Louisville, Ky., where delegates will debate its contents and vote on its adoption during their May 5-15 session.

Retired United Methodist Bishop Ole E. Borgen of Wilmore, Ky., a member of the committee which created the proposal, made a last-ditch effort last week to change what he believes is the book's inappropriate language for God.

Not God's nature

Throughout the worship-book study process, Bishop Borgen argued against any imagery or form of address that would represent God as anything other than "Father."

Ole Borgen

Charles Jones

"The language of God in the Bible is not metaphorical, it's an ontological question [an issue of God's being]," argued Bishop Borgen during sessions of the General Board of Discipleship. "Only if the Bible is seen as a human book can God be reduced to metaphors."

The bishop, formerly the episcopal leader of the Northern Europe Area, contended tbat alternative forms of "God language" offered as options in the worship book do not accurately represent the nature of God's being as expressed in the Bible.

The most frequently used alternative is "Almighty God."

Bishop Borgen also contended that the proposed worship book failed to fulfill the instruction from the church's 1988 policy-making General Conference that the new book should retain the traditional address for the Trinity as "Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

Committee members, however, cited numerous sections in the proposed worship book where traditional language is used, especially in baptism and in the ordination of clergy.

Refuted by layman

In addition, the bishop was refuted by United Methodist layman Charles Jones of Van Nuys, Calif.

Mr. Jones, a Discipleship director, served as chairman of the 1988 General Conference subcommittee that recommended both retaining "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" and resisting attempts to legislate language for God.

Mr. Jones said the 1988 subcommittee spent "hours of consultation" on more than 90 proposals regarding language for God. He said that "grass roots" sentiments on the issue were equally divided between using only traditional forms for God and employing new imagery based on religious experiences from other cultures.

"To 'retain' does not mean to exclude other types of language," Mr. Jones said. "My sense is that we're spending far too much time on the 'salutation' and not enough time on the 'letter' [in worshipping God]."

Later, however, Bishop Borgen was not left standing alone. Bisbops Louis W. Schowengerdt (Northwest Texas-New Mexico Area) and Thomas B. Stockton (Virginia Area) joined him in objecting to inclusion of a prayer addressing God as "Mother." The prayer was used to open the 1987 United Metbodist Clergywomen's Consultation.

The bishops contended that the prayer is "fertility cult worship" that they found offensive.

But the male bishops were countered by their sister bishop, Susan M. Morrison (Philadelphia Area), who chaired the book of worship study committee.

"It may be offensive to some, but to some it connects with who they are and with their experience of God," she said.

Another Discipleship director, the Rev. S. Clifton Ives of Portland, Maine, agreed, saying, "Some may use it; some may not. The point is that this book of worship is a guide, a resource; it's not law."

'Significant moment'

After the proposed worship book's approval at the end of a morning-long discussion, the Discipleship board's president, Bishop Woodie W. White, lauded its passage—without a dissenting vote—as a "significant moment in the life of this board.

"And we await the same significant moment at General Conference," added Bishop White before leading the directors in an affirming chorus of "Thank You, Jesus."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Distinguished evangelist installed

NASHVILLE—Bishop Woodie W. White, president of the General Board of Discipleship, anoints the Rev. Ralph W. Mohney Sr. as Dr. Mohney is installed as the board's first "distinguished evangelist." The new position was funded by contributions from the United Methodist-related Foundation for Evangelism headed by retired Bishop Earl Hunt Jr. At left is the Rev. Ezra Earl Jones, Discipleship chief executive. Dr. Mohney was chosen in recognition of his contributions as a United Methodist pastor, evangelist, college president, author and consultant. He will direct church growth ministries for Discipleship's evangelism section.

Small-membership churches are focus of 14 proposals by board

Reporter Staff Special

NASHVILLE—Does your congregation have fewer than 200 members?

If so, you'll be interested in some proposals that could give congregations like yours a boost in the near future.

Fourteen proposals intended to aid small-membership churches were passed by directors of the church's General Board of Discipleship during their Oct. 10-13 meeting. The proposals will be considered by the 1992 General Conference May 5-15 in Louisville, Ky.

The proposals are the result of a 3½-year study on the nature and needs of small-membership churches.

"We didn't concern ourselves with the 'survival' of these churches but with studying how they function and how to strengthen their ministries," said Myrtle Felkner, a part-time Discipleship staff member who chaired the study committee.

The study showed that:

- 66 percent, or 24,693 United Methodist congregations, have fewer than 200 members.
- These congregations represent 22.9 percent of total United Methodist membership, 29.6 percent of total worship attendance and 31.7 percent of total Sunday school attendance.
- 53 percent of all United Methodist churches are on multi-congregation circuits served by one pastor, and appointments to these churches account for nearly one-third of all pastoral assignments.
- 71 percent of all United Methodist congregations have average worship attendance of fewer than 100 persons.

These statistics point out the need to aid small-membership congregations, especially in "situations where they are the only expression of the Christian Gospel," the committee's report stated.

Cornerstone of the proposals is a model of ministry known as "Nurture-Outreach-Witness (NOW)."

The NOW model gives small-membership churches an additional option beyond structures provided for in current church laws.

By combining similar functions under categories of nurture, outreach or witness (NOW), a small-membership congregation could fulfill all of its ministries with as few as 10 laypeople in leadership positions, the committee said in its report.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Baptism study, other reports passed

Reporter Staff Special

NASHVILLE—Deep divisions over a United Metbodist understanding of baptism prompted directors of the church's General Board of Discipleship last week to recommend that local congregations be given four years to study a proposed statement before it is considered for adoption by the denomination as official doctrine.

In other action, Discipleship directors noted completion of 70 separate referrals of action from the 1988 General Conference. In addition to the baptism study, a proposed book of worship, and a small-membership church study (see accompanying stories), topics referred included:

- ✓ Older adult ministries,
- ✓ Prison ministries,
- ✓ Family ministries,
- ✓ A study on the ministry of all Christian believers,
- ✓ Establishment within the Discipleship board of a Division of United Methodist Men,
- ✓ Participation in the preparation of a national plan for Hispanic ministries.

In the midst of grief, churches 'helped any way they could'

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

KILLEEN, Texas—On this warm October Saturday afternoon, more than 600 mourners filed quietly though the white-columned portico of First United Methodist Church in Killeen.

This was one of two United Methodist churches hit by death from the worst mass murder in the nation's history—24 people having lunch at a Luby's cafeteria two miles away

One was Killeen educator Ruth Pujol, 55, a member of First Church. The mourners were gatbered for her funeral.

Many wore curled white ribbons on their lapels, signaling their grief for all 24 killed only three days earlier.

A sanctuary banner declared, "I am the resurrection and the light." Candles flickered over an open Bible.

Sanctuary rings with song

The crowded sanctuary rang with strong voices singing "God of the Ages," "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," and "Amazing Grace."

A family member's arm stretched across the shoulder of the greiving widower, Elwray Pujol. Muffled sobs could be heard throughout the sanctuary.

"Whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die," said the Rev. Joe Fagg, reading from the scriptures.

Mrs. Pujol was one of several Killeen Independent School District administrators who had come to Luby's to celebrate "Bosses' " Day. Three were killed.

Reflecting back 72 hours as he talked to the Reporter, Associate Pastor Stephen Schmidt said, "Every time we could find a place to help, we would." He was one of the first on the scene to offer counselling to survivors and families at the Sheraton Hotel across the street from the restaurant.

Some members, he said, set up intercessory prayer groups and kept the church's chapel open for those who wanted to pray. Some worked as Red Cross volunteers. Others made piles of sandwiches for the counselling sessions and prepared meals for the Pujol family, he said.

Seven from one town

Some 10 miles west of Killeen, the small town of Copperas Cove reeled under the loss of seven residents to the gunman.

Grace United Methodist Church there has been badly buffeted by death. In one week they lost their pastor and a laywoman to illness and two of their members at Luby's.

But when the congregation gathered for worship last Sunday, it wasn't the gunman they were talking about. They were talking about the man who taught them go on as a church in the face of tragedy, the Rev. W. C. Taylor, who bad died of cancer one week before the killings.

Members credited Mr. Taylor with helping them understand what it means to be a church—like a family, like the parts of one body.

He had revitalized the United Methodist Men's group with Saturday morning breakfasts and formed them into a singing group named GraceMen.

One of the GraceMen and a member of the breakfast group was veterinarian Michael Griffith, 48, former president of the administrative board, who was shot to death in Killeen.

Through Mr. Taylor's final illness, the men's group he formed and other members of the churcb stayed with him around the clock so he would not have to go to a hospital.

Taught them about dying

And through that time, Mr. Taylor taught them about dying and about their own mortality. Many said his teachings helped them cope with the death of Dr. Griffith and Lt. Col. Steven Charles Dody, 43, who had joined tbe cburch only a short time earlier.

"Church members had been working day and night to help support W. C. [and his wife, Pat] and now the families of those who were killed," said Myrna Schulze, president of United Methodist Women. "They have prepared meals seven days a week for six weeks. No one wanted any credit.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

KILLEEN, Texas—The Rev. Stephen Schmidt, associate pastor of First United Methodist Church, Killeen, helped counsel survivors and families of victims after the worst mass murder in U.S. history.

"The whole church pitches in. We didn't even have to ask.

"W. C. taught us how to live and he taught us how to die," she continued. "Now we are strong enough to mourn him but to go on with the work of the church."

And go on it did. The church was bustling for laity Sunday. Between Sunday school and church, members of United Methodist Women were cooking a pre-funeral meal for the Griffith family.

In the sanctuary, conversations hummed as some 300 worshippers who spanned the generations found their places.

During the service, 14 members of GraceMen—in red bow ties, striped suspenders and navy blue pants—sang "Blessed Assurance" and "Standing on the Promises," stoically carrying out laity-Sunday plans made long ago. However, 10 of their group were sitting in the congregation, too choked up to sing.

The benediction sung by the GraceMen echoed words from Isaiah in the previous day's sermon for Ruth Pujol.

"We will never understand what happened on Wednesday," said Mr. Schmidt, "but . . . if you trust God. . .

"He will raise you up on eagles' wings;
Bear you on the breath of dawn
Make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the the palm of his hands."

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Faith connections

LAYMAN HONORED: The first sponsored faculty position at United Methodist-related Africa University has been named in honor of United Methodist layman **James M. Walker**. The Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries of the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry is sponsoring the chair in pastoral care in the university's College of Theology, which will open in March 1992. Dr. Walker, a member of First United Methodist Church in Seguin, Texas, served as the Southwest Texas Annual Conference lay leader for 22 years. He was president of the South Central Jurisdictional Board of the Laity eight years and vice president of the General Board of the Laity for eight.

EDUCATOR TO RETIRE: **Lambuth M. Clarke** announced Oct. 16 that he will retire as president of United Methodist-related Virginia Wesleyan College effective July 31, 1992. He has served as president of the college since it opened in 1966 with 75 students. Today the school has more than 1,400 students.

LIBERIAN LEADER DIES: **Edward Peal**, Liberian Annual Conference lay leader, died Sept. 14 of a heart attack at a hospital in Arlington, Va. Funeral services were held at Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church in Washington on Sept. 21. Memorial gifts in Mr. Peal's name can be sent to the Africa Church Growth and Development fund

GOOD REPORTS: When 16 Soviet children left the United States in late September they carried with them a good medical report where the Chernobyl nuclear disaster was concerned, but more vivid were their memories of the abundance of food in stores and homes. The group's interpreter took videos in a grocery store to show back home, and one 11-year-old left with a bunch of bananas tucked securely under his arm. The children were brought to the United States through efforts of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the Christian Children's Fund, other organizations in the United States and Russia, and families in the Richmond, Va., area.

FEATURED SPEAKER: The Rev. **Brian K. Bauknight**, senior minister of Christ United Methodist Church in Bethel Park, Pa., will be the featured speaker on the 1991-92 United Methodist series of "The Protestant Hour" radio program. During the 12-week series, "Gracious Imperatives: Discipleship Toward the 21st Century," Dr. Bauknight will focus on discipleship as found in the biblical letters of Paul and others, and its implications in the lives of believers in the present and future. "The Protestant Hour," a cooperative venture of United Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, is produced by the Protestant Radio and TV Center in Atlanta.

Africa University is ready to roll, hits snag

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—In many ways, United Methodist-related Africa University appears ready to roll.

Faculty members for its theological school have been selected; some 8,000 library books are ready for shipment to the school (see related story and picture on this page), and six volunteers-in-mission teams stand ready to renovate buildings on the Zimbabwean site in time to start classes March 23, 1992.

Buildings for sale

But at the recent meeting of the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville, a problem surfaced that may not be quickly resolved: The buildings to be renovated do not belong to Africa University.

Apparently the existing buildings on the Africa University site—some 10 miles from Mutare, Zimbabwe—were not included in the Zimbabwe Annual Conference gift of land to the university, board secretary Ted Hagan reported.

The buildings are owned by the annual conference. According to Mr. Hagan, the Zimbabwe conference board of trustees has offered to sell the buildings to Africa University for about $228,000.

When the sale is final, the 12 buildings will be converted to temporary classrooms, a dining hall, dormitories and faculty offices, Mr. Hagan said. When the permanent buildings are completed, the renovated buildings will become part of a College of Agriculture demonstration farm.

Sale in progress

Final negotiations for the sale are in progress, the Rev. Roger Ireson, chief executive of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, told the Reporter.

Although the board approved the purchase, the church's General Council on Ministries, the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Africa University board of directors must also approve.

Dr. Ireson said he expects all transactions for the purchase to be completed in time for the first of the volunteers-in-mission teams to begin renovation work in late November.

Higher Education and Ministry directors also heard these reports about Africa University:

✓ The School of Theology will open first and will offer a bachelor of divinity degree which will meet ordination requirements of the United Methodist Church in Africa and other denominations;

✓ A master of theology degree program will be established once the bachelor degree program has been fully implemented;.

✓ Theology school faculty have been selected. Dean-elect is the Rev. Yemba Kekumba of Zaire. Others are the Revs. Grace Imathiu of Kenya, Eben Nhiwatia of Zimbabwe and Paul Chilcoat of the United States, and Stephen Reed, a layman, also of the United States. The Rev. John Kurewa is president-elect.

All except Ms. Imathiu have doctoral degrees. She is a doctoral candidate at Cambridge University in England. Her father is Bishop Lawi Imathiu of the Methodist Church of Kenya and president of the World Methodist Council;

✓ The university's working language will be English, the official language of Zimbabwe. However, some lectures will be given in French and Portuguese.

✓ Zimbabwe architects have completed more than 200 initial sketches and drawings for the 1,545-acre campus.

Staff member Angela Current reported that more that 5,000 individuals and congregations have contributed $4.8 million to Africa University fund through apportionments and $1.8 million through World Service Special Gifts.

The church's 1988 policymaking General Conference approved local church four-year apportionments totaling $10 million for construction and operations and another $10 million in additional voluntary giving to endow a scholarship fund. Delegates to legislative sessions in 1992 will be asked to approve the same monetary goals for a second quadrennium (1993-96).

Africa school library gets boost from veteran

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—Rosalyn Lewis' eyes light up when she talks about starting a library for United Methodist-related Africa University.

As librarian for The United Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Ms. Lewis has the responsibility of coordinating the African University library's development on both sides of the Atlantic until that school's librarian is selected.

"It's exciting," she told the Reporter shortly before leaving for Zimbabwe Oct. 21. She has made several trips to Zimbabwe and says she enjoys meeting the people.

One day while shopping she met a man in his 20s.

"What a wonderful thing that your church is doing for our country!" he told her. "Maybe one day I'll be privileged to go [to Africa University]."

"Privilege" is a word often applied to higher education in Zimbabwe, she said. The opportunity means a lot to Zimbabweans.

In Zimbabwe she is helping select a temporary library facility, participating in a committee to select the Africa University librarian and meeting with the architect to discuss both temporary and permanent library facilities.

The permanent library is designed to house 15,000 volumes, Ms. Lewis said. More than 8,000 have been donated from individuals and publishers, she continued.

These volumes were selected from a preliminary core list of 7,500 titles gleaned from existing bibliographies and in consultation with William Hook, Vanderbilt University library director, she said.

"The Africa University librarian and the university faculty will make final decisions about which books will be placed in the library," she said. "Those books not needed for the university library will be made available to faculty, students, ministers and other institutions."

A copy of the book list has been made available to every annual conference, she continued. Donors will pay shipping charges to Nashville, and the Publishing House will ship the books to Zimbabwe.

To donate books to Africa University, contact Rosalyn Lewis, Librarian, The United Methodist Publishing House, P. O. Box 801, Nashville, Tenn., 37202, telephone 615-749-6437.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

NASHVILLE—Rosalyn Lewis, United Methodist Publishing House, is surrounded by some of the 8,000 books donated for shipment to the new United Methodist-related Africa University. She is a consultant in setting up the new library.

Infant-formula marketing rapped

United Methodist News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Marketing campaigns for infant formula products launched recently in the United States are in violation of the World Health Organization/UNICEF Code and should be halted, the United Methodist Board of Church and Society said Oct. 12.

"These campaigns undermine breast-feeding in the pursuit of profit," the board said in a resolution prepared for consideration by the church's 1992 policymaking General Conference.

"These advertising campaigns are vigorously opposed by health professionals including the American Academy of Pediatrics."

Nestle/Carnation, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Gerber are cited specifically in the report.

An open letter to United Methodist readers

On October 15, 1990, Mr. Ralph Waldo Beeson died and left a large bequest to strengthen Asbury Theological Seminary's programs in biblical preaching, pastoral leadership and world mission. Asbury expresses gratitude to God for this gift as we renew our historic commitment to "prepare and send forth a well-trained, sanctified, Spirit-filled, evangelistic ministry" to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world. We stand in awe of God's grace.

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN THESE RESOURCES MAKE? Asbury Seminary has already been strengthened by distinguished professors in chairs endowed by Ralph Beeson: David Seamands (Preaching); George Hunter (Evangelism); Catherine Stonehouse (Christian Education); William Goold (Church Music); and Matthias Zahniser (World Missions).

MUCH IS YET TO COME! Asbury Seminary is in advanced planning for programs and professorships which will make a powerful difference in the ministry of the Church.

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AND THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING. From our founding in 1923, Asbury Seminary has claimed John Wesley's vision, "The world is my parish." For 68 years, we have peopled that vision with graduates who are true to the Word of God, responsive to the call of God and given to the glory of God. Now, the Beeson bequest propels Asbury into a new orbit of opportunity. Faith that sustained us in the past now becomes faithfulness for future ministry. Discipline that resulted in fiscal integrity in the past calls us to stewardship for the future. Openness to the Spirit of God which brought the "Asbury revivals" is now our hopeful gift to the future. To show our gratitude, we model the Wesleyan heritage of personal and social holiness as the message for the future.

WE WILL BE TRUE TO OUR TRUST.

By His grace and with His joy,

David L. McKenna

David L. McKenna, *President*
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Musician fulfills many requests

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Are you one of the thousands of United Methodists who has sung along with Cynthia Wilson-Felder, even if you didn't know it?

You might have seen her on the United Methodist "Catch the Spirit," television program, sung in her choir for Black Methodists for Church Renewal, or experienced her 3½-octave range at "The Gathering of United Methodists," in 1990 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Maybe you were led in a hymn by Mrs. Wilson-Felder at the World Council of Churches meeting in San Antonio in 1989 or joined her in a soul-stirring "Negro spiritual" with the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts in 1991.

Gained fame in 1986

Ever since her tremendous reception as worship leader for the United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, Calif., in 1986, her music ministry has been requested throughout the United States, Canada, Bermuda and Israel.

When she's not on the road fulfilling one of many such invitations, Mrs. Wilson-Felder is the diaconal minister of music at Hamilton Park United Methodist Church in Dallas.

She has recorded a solo album, "There's Another Witness," and is putting the finishing touches on a Christmas album, scheduled to be distributed this year.

Before Ms. Wilson-Felder became featured at United Methodist worship services across the country, she was known as one of the "singing Wilsons" of New Orleans.

"Mother and Daddy both sang. And with all of us, Daddy never had to worry about a choir," said Ms. Wilson-Felder. Her father, the late Rev. Eli Wilson Sr., founded the Ora-Vista Baptist Church in New Orleans.

"The Wilsons" (Eli Jr., Cynthia, Franki, Bobby, McArthur and Darryl) began performing as a family over 30 years ago. Their first appearance together was with their father on a local radio program.

Cynthia Wilson-Felder
. . . music in her soul

Solo career begins

Mrs. Wilson-Felder began her solo career in music after she received a scholarship to United Methodist-related Dillard University in New Orleans.

Eli Jr. introduced her to the Rev. Luther B. Felder II, a United Methodist student at Colgate-Rochester Seminary in Rochester, N.Y. The couple were married while he was still in seminary and served in churches in upstate New York and in the Detroit area.

Although many ministers' spouses during that period seemed uncomfortable in pursuing their own ministries, Mrs. Wilson-Felder said she was always encouraged to use her musical gifts in the local church.

When the Felders moved from Detroit to Arlington, Texas, in 1984, she enrolled in Perkins School of Theology. She received a degree in sacred music there in 1986.

"I had observed that whole business of expectations and stereotypes of pastors' wives who did not have their own ministry, but that didn't happen to me," she said. "My mother did not see any of her dreams fulfilled and did not work outside of the home. Momma didn't even drive. Not until after Daddy died.

Work hand-in-hand

"But Luther and I have always worked hand-in-hand in the ministry, even if it's at separate churches and separate annual conferences," Mrs. Wilson-Felder continued. Dr. Felder is the pastor of Grace United Methodist Church in the Central Texas Conference.

"I also think it's important for my daughters to see that a female can nurture her family and pursue her dreams—with a little coordination."

The Felders have two daughters: Chiantia, 16, and Llewon, 12.

Today Mrs. Wilson-Felder not only has her own music ministry but gives leadership to several innovative programs across the church.

Last year she participated in sessions of six annual conferences. She also conducts music workshops with the multi-cultural staff for the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, assisting worship leaders with ways to use the new United Methodist Hymnal.

She has just completed a music video for United Methodist Communications' "New Freedom Music" division, promoting "Songs of Zion." And she looks forward to an international exchange with other ministers of music through the Africa University in 1993.

Mrs. Wilson-Felder said her great desire is to develop a model for music ministry in the black church.

CLASSIFIED

FAMILY LIFE CENTER DIRECTOR — Opening a new Family Life Center, Spring of 1992. Director will work with Family Life Council to establish, plan and implement programs. Will also supervise part-time staff and volunteers. Initially will help set policies and order equipment. FUMC, Lufkin, is in the beautiful piney woods of East Texas with membership of 1800. For job description and qualification requirements, contact: James McPhail, Sr. Pastor, 805 E. Denman, Lufkin, TX 75901 or call (409) 639-3141.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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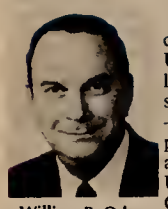
A RENEWED COVENANT FOR A NEW CENTURY
VISION 2000

Our Connectional Ministries


William B. Oden

It is difficult to communicate to United Methodist laity — and even some preachers — the reason apportionments are at the heart of the United Methodist Church.

There was a time when both pastors and congregations paid apportionments enthusiastically and without question. I still remember my early ministry as a student pastor when I had to report on Audit Day. Leaders in the congregation I served would begin calling days ahead to make certain we were "paid out." There were years that I took the necessary cash with my report — cash from kitchen fruit jars and weathered wallets. I also remember one retirement speech after another as pastors would proudly state to an enthralled Annual Conference Session, "In 40 years of ministry, the churches I served always — without exception — paid 100% of their askings."

But "now" is not "then." Governments and bureaucracies are distrusted. During a recent Shepherd's Visit, a board chairperson of a small church that had not paid its apportionments for a number of years confronted me with the words: "It's really not that we **can't** pay. In fact, we just raised $18,000 in one week for an air conditioner. We are holding back because we are uncertain if the money is being spent the way we want!" The brother's name is legion.

In light of the above, several thoughts:

1. *Apportionments really haven't increased over the years.* I have done a comparison of 1980 and 1990 financial summaries of the Louisiana Conference. In the 10 years, clergy support increased 114%. (Thank God)! Other local church expenses increased 107.7%. During this same time, apportionments increased 55.4%. That didn't even keep up with inflation!

2. *The issue is not financial. The issue is what it means to be the Church.* In the tradition of the Apostle Paul and John Wesley, Methodism is based on the reality of connectedness. We are not isolated individual congregations set adrift in a troubled world. We are parts of a whole. We are units in a movement. We share a common memory and a common mission. The truth is that we have not lived out of this truth very faithfully or communicated it very effectively.

3. *The United Methodist Church will be only as strong in the future as its congregations are committed to the connection.* Our laity are right to hold the church accountable for connectional policies and funds. Trust is essential to our giving. But I'm convinced that most unpaid apportionments are not because of the desire to make a statement as much as an easy way out of dealing with tight budgets. Most local churches will do whatever is important to the pastor and lay leadership!

Finally, let us acknowledge that these times really are tough; that recession is a reality and that the circle of good causes desperately seeking funds continues to grow.

Even so, the cburcb has a window of opportunity to make a real difference in an emerging new world order. And our apportionments are significant ways Jesus Christ is offered to this troubled world in our own church and community, in hamlets, villages, and centers of power all over the globe.

Apportionments are **not** taxes. Dr. Albert Outler, famed Methodist theologian who died in 1989, was once asked by Martin Marty in an interview what he had learned in 40 years of preaching and teaching. Outler's response: "I used to preach 'you've *got* to love.' Now I preach 'you *get* to love'!" That is the essence of the apportionment system.

William B. Oden

1992 Louisiana Conference 'Budget at A Glance'

OUTREACH:		MINISTERIAL SUPPORT:	
World Service	$ 808,000	Other Ministerial Services	$ 886,000
Conference Benevolences	532,000	Pastors' Equitable Salary, Pension and Disability Benefits	810,000
Ministerial Education	388,000	Sub-total Ministerial Support	1,696,000
Centenary College	580,000	ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE:	
Dillard University	66,000	General Church	92,000
Black College Fund	144,000	Conference	560,000
Wesley Foundations	570,000	Sub-total Administrative Support	652,000
African University	73,000	TOTAL 1992 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE BUDGET	$5,612,000
Ecumenical Ministries	52,000		
Other Benevolences	51,000		
Sub-total Outreach	$3,264.000		

Apportionments or Connectional Ministries or our Church's Wider Mission

DR. STONE W. CARAWAY
Executive Director of Administration/Treasurer

Should we re-name the Church's apportionments? Re-naming can alter persons' lives; it can change their attitude and behavior. We all know some changes would be in order. For example, have you heard others say, or perhaps said yourself, that apportionments seem like taxes, they seem like a lot of hard work to raise, or they, in the worst case, seem like penalties or the "cost of doing business." Can such attitudes be changed by re-naming the subject? I doubt it. Dr. Ezra Earl Jones, General Secretary of the General Board of Discipleship, stated in "Perspective":

> We have a problem in The United Methodist Church today. Giving has become a chore. It is promoted as a duty, and it is responded to that way. I never hear anyone talking about the joys of giving in The United Methodist Church. I never hear anybody talking enthusiastically about the outreach ministry of the cburch. I rarely hear anyone expressing gratitude to annual conference or general conference agencies for the work they do to extend the local church's ministry. I never hear anybody arguing that the church can do more. Am I in the wrong place?

What will change our attitude? One way to move from a poor to a better attitude is through knowledge. When United Methodist people really know how their money is used, I believe giving becomes a joy and something to celebrate. In Dr. Jones' article that I referred to earlier, Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum was quoted:

> Everywhere I go in the world, I meet Methodists who are making peace. I see leaders of the rising African nations and learn that they were trained in your mission schools. I find educated populations who stand up and call their leaders to accountability and discover that they too were trained in your schools.
>
> Everywhere I go in Africa, there are Methodist missionaries at work where they have been for more than 100 years, making peace, giving people hope and dignity, building community. I see the same thing in South America and Asia. You people are the peacemakers of the world.
>
> But I never see you celebrating it. You ought to be shouting it from the roofs. You ought to be telling the world what you are doing.
>
> But you just give your money and forget it. I ask Methodists around here what you are doing, and no one seems to know.
>
> Why aren't you celebrating?

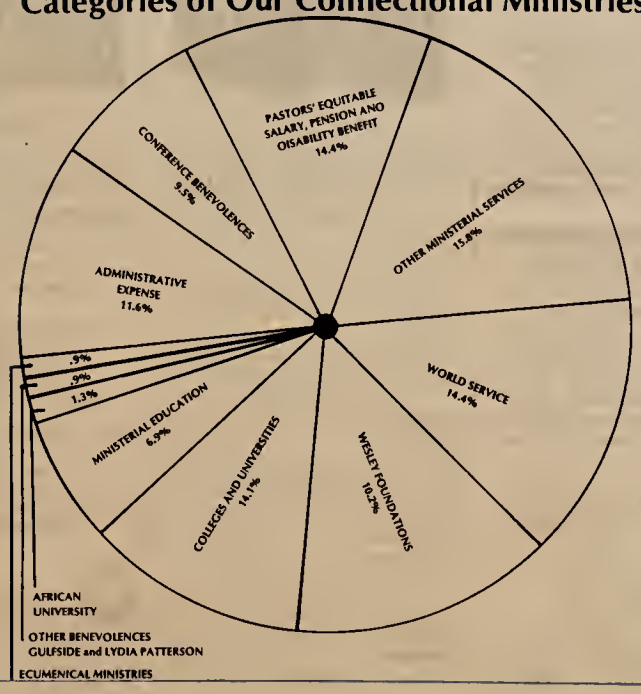
United Methodists have reason to celebrate when they know what their money is doing and even more importantly when they know for whom their money is given.

The words of Mother Teresa are worthy of consideration:

> To show great love for God and our neighbor, we need not do great things. It is how much love we put in the doing that makes our offering Something Beautiful for God.

The following profile of our Louisiana Conference Program for 1992 is to inform, but also to cballenge us to think not just about **for what** but in terms of to **Whom.**

Categories of Our Connectional Ministries



World Service $808,000

This first mile giving takes us beyond our own local church walls and community. Through World Service, missionaries are placed in more than 90 countries of the world. Through this outreaching global mission fund, thousands of lives are touched and ministries supported. 14.4% of our budget goes to World Service.

Conference Benevolences $532,000

9.5% of our budget is utilized directly to support local cburches within their ministries. The Council on Ministries encourages, coordinates and supports important programs of the conference.

Council on Ministries Resources
Support services for conference, district and local church ministries
Vision 2000
Funding of specific programs and projects provided by the annual conference in response to the Initiative of Vital Congregations — **Faithful Disciples**
Global Ministries
Healtb and Welfare Ministries
Conference and General Advance Specials
Relationship and Oversight with Conference Mission Institutions
World Hunger Concerns
Urban Ministries
Volunteers in Mission
Church Extension and Revitalization
Town and Country Ministries
Discipleship
Christian Education
Evangelism
Worship
Camping
Age Level Ministries
Disaster Relief
Assisting Local Churches to Respond in the event of a disaster through training and limited funding
Church & Society
Training Local Church Leaders in the Church's Response to Concerns of the Society
Advocating for change within the society of such issues as Peace with Justice, Environmental Concerns, Concerns for People in Poverty, Human Welfare Concerns (Health Care, Drug and Alcohol Concerns, AIDS Education and Response, Racism, Political Awareness, Education and Monitoring)
Laity
Training for Local Lay Leadership
Advocate for concerns of the laity
Lay Speaker Training
Lay Witness
Bob Lay Memorial 1000 Club
Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarships
Relationship to the conference United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women and United Methodist Youth Fellowship
Committees & Commissions
Special Ministries — Training and Support of Local Churches in Ethnic Ministries — Leadership Development in Ethnic Congregations
CrossLines — Concern for creating ministry from local churches in response to the needs of breaking the cycle of poverty for families and the children of poverty
Communications
Audio-Visual Resource Library
Louisiana United Methodist weekly newspaper
Training Events
Conference-wide media for the Church
Operational Funding for the important ministries provided through the various monitoring, resourcing and guidance Boards, Commissions and Councils:

Board of Ordained Ministry
Board of Diaconal Ministry
Board of Trustees
Commission on Archives & History
Commission on Religion and Race
Commission on Status and Role of Women
Council on Youth Ministries
Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns

Ministerial Education $388,000

This fund provides support for the theological education of both diaconal and ordained ministers. Twenty-two percent of the money raised is retained and administered by the annual conference. This is 6.9% of the budget.

Colleges and Universities $790,000

Another 14% of our budget goes to the support of Centenary College and Dillard University and the Black College Fund. Centenary is owned by the conference and Dillard is owned jointly by the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the United Church of Christ. Both institutions are known throughout the nation as leaders in excellence and innovation in higher education. Many of our conference leaders have come through the ranks of Dillard and Centenary. Since the 1860's our churches have provided quality education through support of our black schools. Ten colleges and a medical school have met the individual needs of thousands of students.

Wesley Foundations $570,000

10.1% of the budget provides a relationship with and oversight of the 10 full-time campus Wesley Foundation and Ecumenical Ministry units across the state.

African University $73,000

This fund is to assist in providing start-up costs and the establishing of a permanent endowment for a university on the African continent. The new university will be developed in stages, beginning with a school of theology, then a college of agriculture and rural development, and finally, other colleges providing specialized training to meet contemporary African needs. 1.3% of our budget is utilized for the African University Fund.

Support of Ecumenical Ministries $52,000

The Louisiana Interchurch Conference and the Interdenominational Cooperative Fund help provide for United Methodist participation in mission with other Christian faiths within the state and beyond. This is .9% of the budget.

Other Benevolences Gulfside Assembly and Lydia Patterson Institute $51,000

Both institutions have long-standing distinguished records of ministry. Gulfside is the site of many retreats, youth gatherings and training opportunities. Lydia Patterson is the only United Methodist predominately Hispanic educational institution in the United States. Together they receive .9% of our conference budget.

Other Ministerial Services $886,000

16% of our budget is for tbe support of our Episcopal and District Offices. It provides compensation, office expense, continuing education, missional expense and health insurance.

Pastors' Equitable Salary, Pension and Disability Benefit $810,000

This fund underwrites the minimum salary scale for pastors and provides pensions for retired ministers and surviving spouses of deceased ministers with 14.4% of the conference budget.

Administrative Expense $652,000

Only 11.6% of our budget goes for administrative expenses. These expenses include annual, jurisdictional and general conference sessions, the support of the conference offices and the funding of committees and offices of the church at large.

Editorial

Where amid tragedy can we find God's presence?

Amusing moments can help focus attention on more serious matters.

According to "The New York Times," a teacher at a Jewish kindergarten recently was explaining the omnipresence of God to her class.

"Is God in your bedroom?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Is God in your kitcben?"

"Yes."

"Is God in the den with you when you play Nintendo?"

"Yes," the children said, giggling.

The teacber then said that God also can be found outside the home.

"God is even in Waldbaum's grocery story," she said.

"Which aisle?" one little girl immediately piped up.

This story of children's innocent faith that God is everywhere seems far removed from recent "more serious matters:" the mass murder of 23 people in Killeen, Texas and a killer fire in Oakland, Calif.

However, the youngster's query—"Which aisle?"—put in specific terms a general question on the hearts of countless people of faith:

Where in the world, amid a senseless massacre and a devastating inferno, can we find the presence and love of God?

The question is both familiar and troubling, so much so that adults, unlike unsopbisticated schoolchildren, frequently avoid openly asking and grappling with it.

We believe such avoidance is misguided.

Perplexity about wby a good and ever-present God seems absent in times of suffering is at least as old as the biblical story of Job.

To the dismay of many through the centuries, Job gives no simple answer to the problems of undeserved suffering and evil. Nevertheless, his experience—and that of many others in biblical accounts—reveals a crucial insight:

Wrestling with life's most agonizing questions within the context of religious faith does, in fact, bring us closer to God and to a redemptive awareness that when we suffer, God suffers with us.

And Christian compassion requires that we be willing to confront directly troubling questions about God's presence in the midst of suffering. It tells those wbo suffer that we are aware of their spiritual pain and are willing to struggle with them amid their doubts about God's goodness or, even, God's existence.

As Christians, we should use such opportunities to remind others and ourselves that such wrestling with God, like Jacob did, in the dark night of our souls, opens channels through which we can experience the healing presence of God.

Sadly, "dark nights" are being endured beyond Killeen and Oakland. Countless people worldwide are faced with the spiritual trauma of unmerited suffering in the form of civil wars, natural disasters, AIDS, and senseless acts of violence—to name a few. They too are questioning in which "aisle" God can be found.

As Christians, we sbould affirm that such soul-felt questions may be a necessary step toward spiritual healing.

Further, in concrete acts of Christ-like compassion—including listening and prayer—we should be living examples of "aisles" in which God's love and reality can be found.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

During tragedy's "dark nights of the soul," Christians can be channels for the presence of God through concrete acts of compassion like that of these comforters at a memorial service for one of the massacre victims in Killeen, Texas.

My Witness

The sight of a rainbow taught me to see God

By SHERRY M. HEATH

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Sherry M. Heath is administrative secretary at Greene Street United Methodist Church, Piqua, Ohio (West Ohio Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

The beach at sunrise is always special, more so on the last morning of my annual vacation trip to Florida. Each of the seven mornings I would rise long before family, grab a freshly brewed cup of coffee and head out to the seashore. This special vacation always provided the rest and renewal to go back to the "world of the church office" where I serve as an administrative secretary 51 weeks of the year.

The vacation is so much of a change from the office that the most administrative decision I need to make during this 52nd week is which direction to walk each day on the beach.

'Rainbow revolt'

The final morning proved to be a life-changing experience, thusly named the morning of the "rainbow revolt."

As I faced the ocean and felt tbe wind, I realized tbat a storm was brewing and rain was imminent. I could not detect which direction the storm was heading and decided not to go out for the walk for fear I would choose the wrong direction and get caught. The sun was shining brightly in the east behind me but the storm was definitely building and the lightning was becoming more evident.

Suddenly the most colorful rainbow formed directly over the approaching storm. It is not often tbat both ends and the entire arch of a rainbow may be viewed and the vivid colors were breathtaking. To enhance this awesome display the lightning continued to appear beneath the rainbow and the storm continued to build.

I was so awestruck with tbis magnificent display of God's power I could only wish that the beach was not vacant and that I could share this experience with someone.

A man appears

Suddenly, from the hotel next door I observed a man exit the apartment and head down tbe beach. He obviously had his own agenda, head down, viewing the sand, water, shells, disturbing the seagulls with his hurried gate.

I wanted to shout, "Wait, look, see ... God put tbat rainbow out there for us all to see!" I watched until he was down the beach and realized that he did not once look up and see what I had so enjoyed.

Reflecting as the rainbow faded I wondered just how much like that man I was ... caught up in my own agenda, looking at the familiar, the immediate and failing to lift my head just slightly to see what God had put on the horizon for me to experience.

I retumed to the church office to begin the next 51-week assignment, but with not quite the same attitude.

Now, I am sure that God has put something out there for me to see and I am less likely to be so intent on the immediate and the familiar.

Yes, I am beginning to look for God's rainbows and listen to God's leading more eacb day . . . I wouldn't want to miss one of those "rainbow" opportunities again.

Letters to the Editor

I'm deeply disturbed by theologian's challenge

I am deeply troubled by the implications of the challenge that Anglican theologian Kwok Pui-Lan put before the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (see UMR, Oct. 18).

Dr. Kwok appropriately urges the church to work for justice and to be a sign of hope for human brokenness, but in her desire to be accepting and tolerant, she strips Christianity of its central truth.

Jesus is not the Christ for Dr. Kwok. Jesus is not the Savior, the Way and the Truth and the Life, for she admits that should the symbols of Christianity cease to have meaning for her she could easily abandon the faith.

Does she want the church to present Jesus Christ as just one of a number of gods or goddesses in which one might choose to believe? God forbid that this should be the direction the church is heading.

Yes, we must be appreciative of cultures that are different from our own; but if we are true to the Gospel message, we will lift up Jesus Christ as 'the Word made flesh' and the only name under heaven by which we must be saved.

Robert A. Hayes
Maryville, Tennessee

Why blame Columbus?

Why should we blame Columbus for the conquest of America and our current problems (see UMR, Oct. 11)? Others came to America before and after Columbus. Indeed, the "Native Americans" came to America from Asia.

The trend today is to blame someone else for our problems. We could sit around talking about how this all started in the Garden of Eden, but where would that get us?

How can injustices of the past be "corrected" when the past cannot be changed? We can deplore the past and learn from it. We can plan for the future, but all we bave is the present.

All of us and our ancestors bave at times been unjustly discriminated against. Instead of bemoaning the past, we need to use what we have here and now to work for the cause of Christ.

Iona Oneale
Breaux Bridge, Louisiana

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, must be original and must carry the signature and address of the author.

The editors reserve the right to edit, condense or reject any letters received.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What others are saying

"Christ seeks out and is present with all people in tbeir pain. The church has the responsibility to minister not only to individuals but also, at times, by changing the structures and attitude patterns in our society."

—The Rev. Miriam Glover-Wetherington, pastoral care instructor, Duke University Divinity School

* * *

"Without Scripture, experience is an untrustworthy guide because we are so prone to substitute our prejudices for God's will. But without experience, our use of Scripture easily becomes static and legalistic, as if the Bible were a book of propositions rather than a book of witnesses to the God of history."

—The Rev. Michael Kinnamon to General Board of Disciples of Christ.

* * *

"Historically, United Methodists have always opposed gambling. A meaningful life is built upon the inner values of honesty, love, good will, faith and justice. A democracy can never be sustained by people who want to trust only luck for their well-being."

—Bishop Louis W. Schowengerdt, Northwest Texas-New Mexico Area.

Faithfully yours

48 hours on Christianity's 'cutting edge'

Cynthia B. Astle

I can't remember when I've had 48 hours that were more spiritually enriching—or more profoundly disturbing.

My regular fall assignment in Nashville included a first for me—covering the semi-annual meeting of a United Methodist agency with a tongue-twisting name and an enigmatic identity to local congregations—the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

After the first two days, it was easy to see why, from the vantage point of a local congregation, the commission's work of seeking unity among many branches of Christianity and dialogue with believers of other faiths might seem far removed.

Struggling to follow the meeting's rapid succession of cutting-edge theological topics left me breathless and brimming with questions.

We went from opening remarks by the Rev. Bruce Robbins, chief executive of the commission, through worsbip in the garage-turned-sanctuary that is Edgebill UMC in Nashville, to the provocative presentation of Asian theologian Dr. Kwok Pui-Lan of Hong Kong (see UMR, Oct. 18).

Dr. Robbins described the "whirlwind" that is today's search for Christian unity, where global events are moving too fast to assess their impact on churches.

The Edgehill congregation—made up of all ages and races and welcoming those of all sexual orientations—embodies a vision of the grace of God that many United Methodists find disturbing.

And Dr. Kwok? Suffice it to say that the view of Christianity she presented as an Asian woman theologian poses so many puzzles for me that it may take years to piece them together.

Just one of her assertions—that contemporary Christians must find ways to articulate our faith that will not offend other believers—runs counter to everytbing I have understood about the uniqueness of tbe Christian message.

Amid all this, I kept coming back to questions—some posed by Dr. Robbins and others, some of them my own:

How do I tell what is authentic in my faith and wbat is false religion?

How do I reconcile consideration for other believers with my firm belief in the risen Christ?

How does our church's growing global awareness change the way we think, pray and process our activities together? What are the limits? How far can we expand?

These exciting and troubling questions, and others too numerous to list, portend great changes.

Yet it seems likely to me that such questions are what thoughtful Christians will struggle with in the next few years as we try to live faithfully in a world whose future we cannot see.

I once heard a pastor assert that Christian faith was meant to "comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable." In those 48 hours, I discovered it's possible to be both at the same time.

Unsettling as they were, my days in Nashville left me able to sing, as we sang at Edgehill:

"Done made my vow to the Lord, and I never will turn back. I will go, I shall go, to see what the end will be."

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Ms. Astle is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"He called to the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.' " (NRSV)

Book Chapter : Verse

(Last week's answer: Ephesians 4:4-6)

Readings for week of Nov. 3

Monday: Psalms 11:33-40
Tuesday: Psalms 119:41-48
Wednesday: 1 Kings 17:8-16
Thursday: Mark 12:38-40
Friday: Mark 12:41-44
Saturday: Hebrews 9:24-26
Sunday: Hebrews 9:27-28

The United Methodist REPORTER

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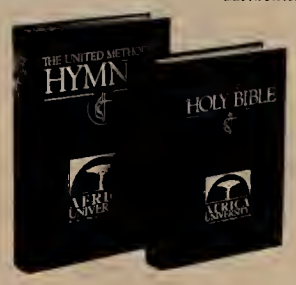

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Faith watch

PRAY FOR PEACE: Chief executives of Christian world communions such as the World Methodist Council issued a prayer last week for Middle East peace talks which opened Oct. 30 in Madrid. Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, the communion heads offered four prayers of petitions, including one "for a reconciliation of issues that have led to war and conflicts that have deepened human tragedy among millions of peoples." Among those issuing the appeal was the Rev. **Joe Hale,** general secretary, World Methodist Council.

EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA: United Methodist "partner cburches" in India are aiding victims of an earthquake that hit that country last week. The Rev. **R. Dean Hancock,** United Methodist Committee on Relief project officer, said the official death toll was listed at 361, but other estimates are as high as 670 in the Himalayan foothills approximately 180 miles north of New Delhi. Messages have been sent to the Council on Relief and Rehabilitation of the Methodist Church of India as well as the ecumenical Churches Auxiliary for Social Action to develop an appropriate response. Gifts can be sent to **Advance No. 212448-2,** for **India Earthquake.**

CHANGED HER MIND: Actress **Regina Taylor,** star of the critically acclaimed new TV series, "I'll Fly Away," told "The New York Tines" recently that one acting class at Southern Methodist University some years ago changed ber career goal from journalism to drama. In the Atlanta-based series, Ms. Taylor plays the role of a housekeeper for a wealtby white prosecuting attorney.

TO MOVE OR NOT TO MOVE: A churchwide study committee has recommended that The United Methodist Cburch's largest program agency, the General Board of Global Ministries, he moved from its current site in New York City. In a 12-page report released as the Reporter went to press, the 15-member task force asked the 1992 General Conference to establish a study group to select a new site for the global ministries headquarters. The committee, chaired hy William Randolph Smith of Houston, voted 9-4, with two persons ahsent, in favor of moving the agency. Reasons for moving tbe agency included the high cost of living in New York City and a need to create a greater sense of ownership of the board hy United Methodists if it were closer to the center of the church's population. Additional coverage of the relocation report will appear in a suhsequent issue.

Soviet effort, relocation top missions issues

UM-backed Memphis-to-Moscow health care link aids children

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—In Moscow, a Russian child lies in a hospital bed with a form of cancer that doctors there cannot identify nor treat.

In Memphis, Tenn., a cancer specialist at a United Methodist-related hospital and researcb center examines a tumor specimen taken from the child in Moscow.

If all goes as hoped, the diagnosis made in Memphis soon will help under-equipped and undertrained doctors in Moscow treat the child and restore his chance at life.

This real-life drama is an example of what the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries helieves will multiply in weeks and months ahead as a result of a unique partnership "brokered" by mission board officials between Methodist Health Systems of Memphis and the Scientific Research Institute of Childhood Hematology in Moscow.

The relationship is a direct outgrowth of initiatives approved last spring hy the mission board's directors to pursue relationships with Christian and humanitarian groups in what was then the Soviet Union.

Cathie Lyons, chief executive of the board's health and welfare ministries program department, gave mission board directors a moving report of a recently completed journey to Moscow cementing the partner relationship between the two hospitals.

Ms. Lyons was part of a five-person United Methodist team of church and hospital officials that visited Moscow in early October.

As a result of their visit, a five-point agreement was made to provide training for Russian doctors, facilitate the exchange of clinical care workers, increase the cancer drug supply for the Russian facilities, acquire advanced lab and computer equipment for the Russians, and to improve standards of care in the Russian hospitals.

The last item included, at the request of the Russian officials, a pastoral clinical education program to aid in the spiritual support for medical staff and patients and their families.

"We want people of faith working with us in our hospitals, and with people who are sick, to help them deal with their illnesses," a Russian physician told Ms. Lyons.

Ms. Lyons described conditions of astounding impoverishment in hospitals she and her team visited.

At the first meeting between the team and their Russian counterparts, she said, proceedings were delayed for nearly an hour because—as she learned afterwards—the Russians couldn't find pencils with which to take notes.

Seeing the antiquated equipment and spartan conditions under which the Russian medical workers were caring for the children cancer victims made her increasingly angry at the former communist rulers of the Soviet republics, Ms. Lyons said.

"Here was a government that could put people in space and build up an enormous stockpile of nuclear weapons. But they were unwilling to take care of their own people. Now that's evil."

Ms. Lyons stated that processes are being developed to find future opportunities for church-related hospitals in the United States and other regions to form similar partner relationships with hospitals in Russia and in the other former Soviet Republics.

UMCOR invites congregations to gather supplies for Soviets

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—As signs of a cold, harsh winter appear in the former Soviet Union, United Methodist congregations will have an opportunity to share the warmth of Christian love with the Soviet people.

Officials of the United Methodist Committee on Relief announced last week that the 37,000 United Methodist congregations across the U.S. will be asked to donate food and medical supplies to the Soviet region.

The project is part of the General Board of Global Ministries new Soviet Initiative (see related stories on this page).

Pastors to get letter

United Methodist pastors and bishops will receive a letter in November encouraging "every United Methodist church to contribute cash and participate in UMCOR's food and medical (supply) gatbering project," said the Rev. R. Bruce Weaver, interim chief executive of the relief agency.

During the agency's October meeting, Dr. Weaver announced that UMCOR will become the lead Protestant relief agency providing humanitarian assistance for the Moscow region, in conjunction with other U.S. denominations affiliated with Church World Service and Witness, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches.

Dr. Weaver said the program is unusual in that UMCOR has been asked hy the World Council of Churches to assume the development and management of the Soviet assistance program. The program will he done in partnership with the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Peace Fund.

The humanitarian relief program also will he a joint effort with United Methodists and other communions in Europe and Asia, who will provide assistance in four other geographical areas in the Soviet Union.

In a report to elected directors of the relief agency, Dr. Weaver said the Russian government is aware of the impending food shortage and has appealed to the glohal community for assistance.

Contributions to assist UMCOR with the Soviet Initiative should be designated to Advance No. 250375-4, for Soviet Food Medical Crisis.

But hillions of dollars in international food aid will not address the need for immediate assistance to thousands of people not protected by the food shortage safety net, such as hahies and children needing vitamin C, the elderly poor, single-parent families, disahled persons, widows of soldiers, and other persons caught in Russia's economic crisis, he said.

UMs can give directly

With UMCOR as the lead relief agency, local United Methodist congregations can participate directly in the "hands-on mission effort" by collecting specified non-perishable foods; seeds for spring planting; and personal and family health kits. These items will he collected at designated sites in the annual conference, placed in 40-foot containers and shipped to Russia.

Dr. Weaver said UMCOR's staff plans to find food processors and suppliers who will donate items or sell them at reduced price.

"For example, we got a call from a company in Florida that said, 'We have $300,000 worth of hospital supplies—surgical gloves, clamps, surgical trays, and other goods—sitting in a warehouse in Florida that we want to donate. Can you use them?'

"It was like the hospitals in Moscow had made a shopping list and gave it to this company," said Dr. Weaver.

When the items are shipped to Moscow, they will go to a central warehouse where volunteers from the Russian Orthodox Church will deliver the food directly to needy persons and soup kitchens in Moscow.

Final details of the Soviet hunger/medical relief program will be negotiated by Dr. Weaver and UMCOR executive Lloyd Rollins this week when they meet with the World Council of Churches staff in Geneva, Switzerland. They travel to Russia Nov. 2 to finalize the program with the Russian Orthodox Church.

From mouths of babes . . .

Soon after the spring meeting of the General Board of Glohal Ministries, its president, Bishop Woodrow Hearn (Nehraska Area), successfully underwent heart hypass surgery.

As one result, a somewhat thinner but rohust-appearing Bishop Hearn was ahle to greet the mission board directors at their Oct. 19-23 meeting with the following story.

A few days after he entered the hospital, Bishop Hearn said, his four-year-old granddaughter was at his house for supper.

Taking notice of the vacant dining chair at which her grandfather usually sat, she announced to the rest of the family:

"Granddaddy's had a terrible accident. His heart attacked him!"

—*STEPHEN L. SWECKER*

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Russian visitors endorse UM church's Soviet initiatives

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—"Warm and heartfelt"—these were words used last week to summarize relations hetween representatives of the church's mission board and a Russian humanitarian agency.

That upheat report came from three Russian memhers of a joint UMC-Soviet commission on humanitarian assistance during the Oct. 19-23 meeting of the General Board of Glohal Ministries.

The men were guests of the mission board as its 178 directors reviewed progress reports and approved plans for the mission agency's outreach initiative to the former Soviet repuhlics.

Plans outlined

Those plans included ongoing missionary support, emergency relief efforts, and implementation of a pioneering hospital-to-hospital partnership (see related stories on this page.)

Board directors also heard a report hy the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III of Dallas of the establishment of a United Methodist church in Ekaterinburg, Russia, initiated by Broadmoor UMC in Shreveport, La., (see UMR, Oct. 4) and a report from Chris Hena, a General Board of Glohal Ministries missionary assigned to Moscow.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES PHOTO BY JOHN C. GOODWIN

NEW YORK—The Rev. Ioan Ekonomtsev (right), a senior official of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Dr. Serge Stankovsky, senior board member of the Soviet Peace Fund, address General Board of Global Ministries directors during the mission board's Oct. 19-23 meeting.

All three members of the Russian delegation addressed the mission board. They included tbe Rev. Ioan Ekonomtsev, a senior official of the Russian Orthodox Church; Dr. Serge Stankovsky; and Vladimir Shaporenko, senior board memher and general secretary, respectively, of the Soviet Peace Fund.

Father Ioan also serves as head of his church's education and communications departments.

To the deep satisfaction of communities worldwide, said Father Ioan, the changes that occurred in August following the attempted ouster of Mikhail Gorhachev helped "Our country step toward true democracy and freedom."

"Many people are now taking baptism and are coming to church, but can hardly imagine what Christian faith is in reality. It is very important for our church to go in the right direction. In that regard, the Russian Orthodox Church would appreciate any assistance from our hrothers here in the U.S."

Father Ioan thanked The United Methodist Church "for charitably sharing with us not only its expertise, hut its financial support, which is so critical for our country."

Dr. Stankovsky told glohal ministries directors that when the military coup failed, to some people, it was the end of their "religion." "Now, we are looking for a new religion," he said.

Economic plight described

An economic adviser and speech writer for Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin, Dr. Stankovsky described how two pounds of meat in the Soviet region may cost at least 50 rubles, but the monthly salary of a Soviet employee is about 350 ruhles.

"Our people have to be resourceful or they won't survive," he said. "But everyone can't do that . . . We need help, especially on the eve of this winter."

Not all was upheat, however, regarding hoard memhers' responses to the Soviet initiative. Following addresses hy the Soviet guests, one elected director expressed concern that the glohal mission board "keep the thought ahout racism and paternalism in mind, to avoid the mistakes of the past."

Another said "there are also children starving and dying of malaria in Africa," who need help.

However, continuation of the Soviet Initiative, first approved last spring, was finally affirmed hy elected hoard memhers through the approval of a board-wide grant of $40,000 for 1992 as well as an UMCOR grant of $400,000 to undergird the mission effort.

Following that action, Lloyd Ambrosius of Lincoln, Nebraska, asked for a full accounting at the mission board's next meeting of money spent for the Soviet Initiative, and for a full report "to he sure the project is in line with the hoard's goals."

Directors urge: 'Keep mission agency in New York!'

By STEPHEN L. SWECKER
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—Keep the church's missions agency in New York City!

That appeal summarized a strongly worded statement adopted without opposition last week hy the 178 elected directors of the church's General Board of Glohal Ministries.

However, in a related action calling for an independent study of what it would cost to relocate the board, tensions related to the relocation issue surfaced among directors.

Tbe seven-page statement calling for retaining the board's New York location ended with a petition to the church's top legislative hody, the 1992 General Conference.

The petition urges policymaking delegates next year to "vote nonconcurrence" on the report of a churchwide task force assigned to study the feasibility of relocating the global missions hoard.

Move recommended

The 15-memher panel studying relocation has recommended that the 1992 General Conference approve moving the missions agency out of New York (see related story ahove).

The Glohal Ministries statement responded:

"The directors of the General Board of Global Ministries believe it would he extremely poor financial and human resource stewardship to spend millions of dollars and great human energy on relocation."

The relocation task force has estimated that moving the hoard would cost $9 million. Glohal Ministries treasurer Stephen Brimigion has estimated that a move would cost some $14.6 million.

Other reasons cited

In addition to the stewardship issue, the Global Ministries statement identified six other reasons for keeping the missions agency in New York.

They included the explanation that New York is at the "crossroads of mission in the most diverse community in the nation" and that the city is at the heart of a growing "multi-cultural United Methodist community."

Tensions surfaced, however, during dehate of an additional related recommendation by the mission hoard's own task force on the mission agency's location.

In its original form, the recommendation called for the hoard to authorize "an independent, professional study of the fiscal, human, and technical costs related to possible hoard relocation."

Objection voiced

Board memher the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III of Dallas ohjected to the recommendation, stating that it would he viewed as "the height of arrogance to spend additional money on an independent study . . . confirming to the church at large that the hoard is out of touch and unresponsive."

The Rev. James Lawson of Los Angeles countered with a passionate response that "a lot of people in churcb are not in touch with the church . . . and expect the church to affirm an American cultural religion."

"Shame on us" for dchating relocation when the world's people are in such great need, Mr. Lawson said.

An amended recommendation was approved hy voice vote hut with several directors casting loud "no" votes. The action requests the denomination's financial agency and/or coordinating agency to make a study of relocation costs with the mission hoard contrihuting up to $25,000 for the study.

"Relocation" was a recurring topic of discussion among mission board directors and staff during the board's Oct. 19-23 meeting. Many stated their helief that the issue was destined to have a major impact on the 1992 General Conference May 5-15 in Louisville, Ky.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

MUSICIAN DIES: The Rev. Roger Deschner, 63, who had a key role in the revision of The United Methodist Hymnal, died at his Dallas home Oct. 23 of cancer. A ministerial member of the denomination's Texas Annual Conference, he was minister of music for 14 years at First United Methodist Church in Houston before going to Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, in 1975. He was secretary of the 25-member committee that revised The United Methodist Hymnal, released in 1990. Dr. Descbner received in July the first award to hear his name from the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music, Worsbip and Other Arts. The fellowship award will recognize persons who make outstanding contributions to the worship life of the United Methodist Church.

NEWSWOMAN NAMED: Jean Caffey Lyles, senior news editor of "Tbe Lutheran" magazine, will join United Methodist News Service as news director in Evanston, Ill., effective Dec. 1. Before joining tbe Lutheran magazine's Chicago-based staff in 1987 she worked tbree years as associate editor/Protestant editor of Religious News Service and 14 years witb "The Christian Century."

NATIONAL MISSION CHIEF: The Rev. Anthony J. Shipley, pastor of Scott Memorial United Methodist Church in Detroit, has heen elected deputy general secretary of the General Global Ministries' National Division. Dr. Shipley has heen a council director for the Detroit Conference, and was president of the National Association of Conference Council Directors from 1974 to 1978. He has also heen adjunct professor at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston, Ill. and was a founding member of Black Methodists for Church Renewal, the caucus of black United Methodists. Dr. Shipley will assume his new post in March 1992.

Anthony Shipley

CHAPLAINS' AID ASKED: United Methodist Bishop Joao Somane Machado of Mozamhique has asked the United Methodist Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries to send personnel to aid reconciliation hetween warring factions in that country now that peace seems imminent. The bishop said at the recent meeting of the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry that be hopes for a peaceful resettlement of more tban 1 million refugees if peace talks are successful.

NO ACTION: At its recent meeting in Nashville, the churcb's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry discussed but took no action on a report from a special Commission for the Study of Ministry. Mixed reviews greeted the study group's proposal to create a permanent order of lay (nonordained) ministers to be known as deacons. The study group's proposal that United Methodist elders (clergy) be ordained only once rather than twice as they are now in a two-step process was also challenged. The 1992 church's policymaking General Conference is expected to act on the study committee's proposal.

Compiled from news and staff reports

TULSA WORLD PHOTO BY DARYL WILSON

UM usher, 92, too busy to retire

TULSA, Okla.—Herbert Hoover was in the White House when Bruce Norman began ushering at Tulsa's Boston Avenue United Methodist Church. And, so far as the church was concerned, that was eight senior pastors ago. Mr. Norman, 92, has been on "Norman's Alley" since 1929. "I can't preach and I can't sing," he told the "Tulsa World," "but I can usher."

'Drawing map of life' spurs UM social-action response

United Methodist News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—United Methodists are being invited to join "a complicated and challenging journey into (a) new frontier" where "a map of biological life is heing drawn."

In a unanimous action recently the denomination's General Board of Church and Society accepted for transmittal to the 1992 General Conference the 10,000-word report of a task force on genetic science that has been at work since 1989.

Accompanying the report will be a shorter statement proposed for the church's Book of Resolutions.

From the church's standpoint, "the urgent task of interpreting the faith in light of tbe biotechnology revolution and evaluating the rapidly emerging genetic science and technology has only hegun," the task force report says.

> *"Christians must evaluate [genetic] developments in light of our basic understanding of God as Creator and of humans as stewards of creation, including technology."*
>
> —Genetic science report

Genetic developments in medicine and agriculture, says the panel, "promise to alter the very nature of society, the natural environment, and even human nature. Christians must evaluate these developments in light of our basic understanding of God as Creator and of humans as stewards of creation, including technology."

The Rev. Kenneth L. Carder, a Knoxville, Tenn., pastor who headed the 11-memher task force, told Church and Society directors that technology is emerging so rapidly that "this draft (of tbe report) cannot be the final one. Scientists say we have come through the chemical revolution and are entering the biological revolution."

The study was ordered by the church's policymaking 1988 General Conference. The proposed Book of Resolutions statement would replace one adopted in 1988.

Pan-Methodists urge anti-drug push

United Methodist News Service

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—The top legislative bodies of three Methodist denominations will be asked to hecome more involved in the "war on suhstance ahuse" through the programs of the Pan-Methodist Coalition on suhstance ahuse.

Three of the four denominations of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation will take this recommendation to their respective General Conferences in 1992.

The commission, formed in 1985, represents the African Methodist Episcopal (AME), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) and The United Methodist churches.

A focus of the commission, which meets annually, was receiving the report of the Pan-Methodist Coalition, formed in 1989 to comhat suhstance ahuse.

The coalition is preparing a church resource kit (available Dec. 1) which will include a 20-minute "Revival of Hope" video, a user's guide, a "Revival of Church Community Action" manual and two books—"Social Witness Resource" and "Being My Neighhor's Neighhor."

Funds will he requested from the United Methodist 1992 policy-making General Conference to help support the commission and coalition.

Delegation finds ministry opening in North Korea

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

NASHVILLE—The Rev. Sang E. Chun says that Asian people "don't jump up and down when they're excited; they just smile."

Mr. Chun is smiling hroadly these days.

A staff memher of the evangelism section of the General Board of Discipleship, Mr. Chun was part of a 13-person United Methodist delegation that went to Pyongyang, North Korea, on Aug. 31.

He bad both professional and personal reasons for making the harrowing trip, he recently told Discipleship directors.

North Koreans visited U.S.

Mr. Chun helped organize a consultation on Korean reunification that hrought eight North Korean representatives to the U.S. last May. This marked the first time the U.S. govemment had permitted North Koreans to enter this country since the Korean War in the early 1950s.

The North Koreans were so impressed by their U.S. experience that they invited a delegation of United Methodist and Presbyterian representatives to visit their country.

The visit took some doing.

North Korea is one of the most closed nations in the world. Visitors are allowed only when invited by the govemment or a government-recognized organization.

Mr. Chun said the Korean-American church leaders who were invited to North Korea went there with three goals:

✓ To strengthen relations between U.S. Korean-American congregations and tbe two congregations—one Roman Catholic, one Protestant—in North Korea;

✓ To minister to the estimated 1 million Korean families who were separated hy the Korean War;

✓ To find ways for U.S. congregations to contribute to the peaceful reunification of Korea.

Government incentive

The first goal has special incentive for the North Korean government, Mr. Chun said.

"My impression is that they are using their two churches as a window to the world so that they can improve their economic situation," Mr. Chun said.

"Their economic situation is much worse than we imagined. They don't know how had they are. Their living standards are unbelievably lower than the U.S."

Mr. Chun showed Discipleship directors a videotape of a worship service in the Pyongyang Protestant church. Although the all-female choir sang beautifully, the faces of the people in the pews revealed little interest in the proceedings.

Mr. Chun said he believed the "worshippers" may have been hrought in to impress the American visitors, particularly since North Korea prohibits religious instruction to anyone under age 18.

Despite the apparent manipulation of this and perhaps other parts of the visit, Mr. Chun said he thinks The United Methodist Church should continue to use the opening into North Korea to work for peaceful reunification of the divided country and as a God-given opportunity for ministry.

The delegation's North Korean visit also afforded Mr. Chun the opportunity to minister to his own family.

While in Pyongyang, he located the family of his hrother-in-law, whose military service separated him from Mr. Chun's elder sister and their two sons during the Korean War.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SANG E. CHUN

PYONGYANG, North Korea—The Rev. Jin Tae Kwon (right) presents a set of United Methodist Korean resources to the Rev. Kijun Ko, secretary of North Korea's Christian Federation. At far right is the Rev. Sang E. Chun, a staff member with the General Board of Discipleship.

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UMs offer aid to California fire victims

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

United Methodists in Northem California are offering pastoral assistance for residents of Oakland, Calif., who were traumatized following a raging fire that hegan Oct. 19.

Alameda County fire officials called the fire "the worst in California's history." What started as a small brush fire flared into an inferno when sparks ignited homes in the Oakland area.

The Oakland Hill neighhorhood has been named a federal disaster area hy President Bush. News reports say that some 3,500 residential units were destroyed, 22 persons were known dead, and 5,000 were left homeless.

Many of the homeless families were taken to shelters in Oakland and Berkeley, Calif. Property damages were estimated to exceed $5 hillion.

Bill Sharp, chair of the California/Nevada Annual Conference disaster preparedness committee, told the Reporter that "the conference is ministering to tbe needs of the people the best way they can.

"But the committee is over taxed since this is our fourth major disaster in two years," said Mr. Sharp, a memher of a memher of Point Pleasant United Methodist Church in Elk Grove, Calif. Those disasters include:

- The California Earthquake in 1989;
- A major freeze of Califomia produce in 1990;
- A severe drought, in 1991.

The Rev. James A. Corson, director of the conference council on ministries, whose office is located in San Francisco, bas made a request for assistance from the United Methodist Committee on Relief. An initial grant of $5,000 was dispatched last week.

In a letter to UMCOR requesting the grant, conference officials said, "Though there are some affluent residents in the area, we are aware that some folks will fall between the cracks, and will need special assistance."

Donations to support ministries for the victims of the Oakland fire should he sent via annual conference treasurers, designated for Advance No. 901328-5, California Fire.

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UM women back literacy

United Methodist News Service

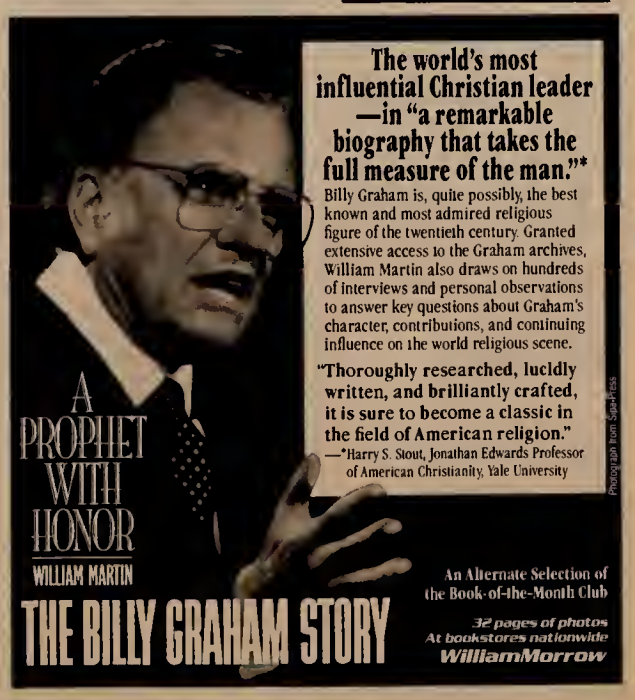
NEW YORK—United Methodists should be leaders in increasing the literacy skills of peoples throughout the world.

A resolution to that effect was approved Oct. 19 hy the Women's Division during the United Methodist Board of Glohal Ministries annual meeting.

"Historically, The United Methodist Church, and its predecessor denominations, has placed high priority on equipping persons to read and interpret the Bible," the resolution said.

"Through these efforts we have experienced the power of the Word to liberate and transform both persons and societies."

The resolution, to be forwarded to the 1992 General Conference, the denomination's top lawmaking hody, supports the fundamental human right to learn and urges governments, churches and individuals to make literacy a priority.



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The United Methodist REPORTER

Book: 'Where does God live?'

'Godsquad,' a rabbi and a priest, co-author theology book for kids

By RICHARD CIMINO
Religious News Service

WOODBURY, N.Y.—A Long Island rabbi and a Roman Catholic priest who are known as the "God squad" have staked out new territory by co-authoring a Jewish-Christian theology for children.

"All of us have been taught too much about how we're different and not enough about how we're the same," said Monsignor Thomas Hartman in explaining the idea behind the book, "Where Does God Live? Questions and Answers for Parents and Children."

Mr. Hartman and his co-author, Rabbi Marc Gellman, were speakers at a recent author luncheon in which they expounded on their book's theme and recounted how their interfaith partnership started.

"The book is the result of three and one-half years of friendship and looking at issues that families face today," said Mr. Hartman.

He and Mr. Gellman co-host a weekly national cable program called "The God Squad" in which they approach a wide variety of religious and social issues from an interfaith perspective.

They said in directing their attention at children they discovered two things: most parents don't know how to handle questions about God, and Jewish and Christian children ask the same basic questions about God.

Goodness of creation

"Where Does God Live?" which is said to be the first children's book from a Jewish-Christian perspective, approaches religious belief through examining nature and the goodness of creation.

"You have to go through nature, but then you get beyond nature to its creator," Mr. Gellman said. The book goes on to ask and answer 17 questions that deal with such topics as death, suffering, prayer, the Bible and miracles.

"Many parents give answers that are too simple."

The book describes miracles as "weird and real." Mr. Hartman, director of Radio and TV for the Diocese of Rockville Center, N.Y., said that he and his co-author do not attempt to explain miracles or other mysteries of faith.

Some things are mysterious

"Many parents give answers that are too simple," he said. "Some things are too mysterious, and it will take a lifetime to understand them. Children should understand that they can't understand everything."

One chapter in the book uses the analogy of many paths to the top of a mountain to teach that there are many ways to God.

Mr. Hartman said that although he believes in Christ as the savior of the world, he also realizes that "not all have the gift to follow Christ." Mr. Gellman added in an interview that the book does not "say all religions are one, and it is not New Age."

He maintained that "fundamentalist Christians can read the book without any problems."

Beliefs are formed at home

Both authors emphasized that religious belief for a child is formed primarily in the home rather than in churches and synagogues.

"We believe that God has a spirit that influences everyone, not just priests and rabbis. Everyone has a responsibility," said Mr. Gellman, who is rabbi of Temple Beth Torah in Melville, N.Y.

The book, which is published by Triumph, has found a readership among interfaith couples and same-faith families.

PHOTO BY JAN LICHTENWALTER

Dancers sign in Florida

Liturgical dancers use sign language to interpret music for the deaf at First United Methodist Church in Ormond Beach, Fla. The church has an active deaf ministries program.

Review

'Series breaks new ground in religious TV'

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

This November, "Catch the Spirit," United Methodist Communications' weekly TV program, offers some of the best work ever done by this excellent series—and in many ways breaks new ground in religious broadcasting.

What is most striking about the episode for Nov. 3-9 is the way it tackles problems which are acknowledged all too seldom either in the church or in our society.

It opens with a profile of stand-up comic Vince Gerardi, the founder of "Comedians in Recovery," a group that performs in hospitals, treatment centers, and clubs.

At a time when so much of what passes for comedy is based on insults, putdowns, appeals to prejudice,and assault on our sensibilities, Mr. Gerardi's brand of humor is welcome relief.

We get a taste, for example, of what the modern world would ask of Jesus if he were applying for a job as Messiah. We also hear Mr. Gerardi testify in a nightclub about God and the church, telling how faith and humor are a part of his recovery from compulsive behavior—and how he found God in the process of recovering.

Media critic the Rev. Kathleen LaCamera reviews two recent, largely overlooked, films: Henry Jaglom's "Eating" and Katherine Gilday's "The Famine Within."

Both shed some light, she believes, on the conflicted relationship women have with food and how our society's preoccupation with thinness fosters eating disorders of all kinds.

It is rare indeed, for a religious broadcast to pay attention to little-publicized films or to little-noticed social problems, but what follows is even more powerful and commendable:

Above, the Rev. Kathleen LaCamera, executive producer of "Catch the Spirit," describes the role of prayer, faith, therapy and Overeaters Anonymous in her own recovery from an eating disorder on the program airing the week of Nov. 3-9.

At right, a member of "Take 6," the Grammy Award-winning group that performed in August at the United Methodist Youth Conference in Columbia, Mo., is featured on another segment of the TV series.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Ms. LaCamera describes the role of prayer, faith, therapy and Overeaters Anonymous in her own recovery from eating disorders.

The fact that she manifests such an engaging, appealing personality makes hers a particularly effective witness to the possibility of healing through recovery from compulsions, of healing the wounds felt by addicts.

If you have any doubts about why your congregation provides space to "12-step" groups such as OA, tune in to this episode.

The episode for Oct. 6-13 has probably already aired in your area, but you may want to order the videotape (number 91-15) just to show your congregation's youth group the segment on "Take 6," the Grammy Award-winning musical group, which performed in August at the United Methodist Youth Conference in Columbia, Mo.

"Take 6" manages to quietly witness to their faith in secular settings.

Also in this episode are profiles of two United Methodist nurses from Tennessee who aided the hungry and the wounded following the Persian Gulf War and of United Methodists in Gainesville, Fla., who are making tents for Kurdish refugees.

Mr. Goodhue, pastor of Island Park (New York) United Methodist Church on Long Island, frequently reviews television and film for the Reporter.

'Fiftysomething' women have reason to be bitter

By A. JAMES RUDIN
Religious News Service

Commentary

Recently, while attending the 40th reunion of my high school class—the class of 1951 at George Washington High School in Alexandria, Va., I became aware of a huge gap in programs of churches and synagogues.

Reunions are often a time for new perspectives, and I discovered at mine that a large group of women among my former classmates had grown bitter about their lives and their role in today's society.

Sadly, their unique talents and special needs have received too little attention from religious congregations.

Many of the "fiftysomething" women at the reunion expressed resentment that because they were born in the 1930s, they had been excluded from very real achievements of the feminist movement.

Married after high school

They married soon after high school graduation, spent years supporting their husbands' careers and gave birth to numerous children. But somewhere along the way an emotional bomb exploded within them that led to a shattering divorce.

After their divorces, my former classmates rapidly discovered they were ill trained for many jobs, too old for some employment, and simply out of touch with the contemporary American work place.

They feel cheated by a society that fed them a pablum of sharply compartmentalized family roles and limited professional education.

One woman put her feelings in especially graphic terms: "I was a white-gloved prostitute who served my husband's sexual, social and economic needs. I had the status of being a married woman, but love and companionship were not in the arrangement."

Millions shortchanged

Such women are now painfully seeking their own personal identities as they confront the remaining 25 years allotted to them by actuarial tables. Millions of other American women have been similarly shortchanged, and they present tremendous challenges for all of our institutions, but especially churches and synagogues.

Most congregations are geared to meet the needs of young people, intact nuclear families and senior citizens. Some singles groups exist, but these are generally aimed at men and women under 50.

As one divorced woman asked during the reunion: "What about us? We seem to have slipped through the cracks of society."

And what about them? These divorced women have gained enormous experience in coping with many of life's most difficult problems. They have been single parents, have cared for their aging parents and supported themselves economically.

My conversations clearly revealed how much they have to offer any church, synagogue or community center.

So what seems to be the problem? Why are their obvious talents being so underutilized?

A possible answer was hinted at, but never fully addressed, at the reunion. It is related to the role of churches and synagogues in fostering stereotypical thinking about women.

During the past 40 years, did religious institutions sanction and perpetuate prevailing negative social norms, or did they present a more positive view of women?

Many in the class of 1951 would contend that churches and synagogues hindered development of a healthy self-image.

Told to get married soon

One woman told me: "My minister said that my role was to get married as soon as possible. It never entered our minds to become lawyers, doctors, clergy, businesspeople, university teachers or social workers."

Churches and synagogues owe emotional and spiritual reparations to these wounded, embittered members. They need to be honored and cherished as people who bought the American dream of the 1950s and then saw it turn sour.

They deserve their own support groups, and they need forums for sharing valuable knowledge, gleaned from experience, perhaps as teachers or counselors.

Religious institutions that perpetuated low self-esteem among women, that were either embarrassed by them or conveniently ignored them—in particular those that until recently refused or still refuse to allow women to serve as clergy or occupy leadership roles—are institutions with a huge and special debt to my high school sisters.

Rabbi Rudin is the national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee.

History of Hymns

'O Zion, haste' hymnist used world missions theme

O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling
To tell to all the world that God is Light;
That he who made all nations is not willing
One soul should perish, lost in shades of night.
Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace,
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

A weary mother cared for her restless child, ill with typhoid fever, and hummed familiar hymns to quiet the feverish child.

One hymn Mary Ann Thomson remembered from her childhood was a favorite melody set to the text "Hark, bark, my soul."

When her child was resting quietly, she began to fit other words about world missions to the tune she liked so well. Phrase by phrase and line by line the poem took shape.

During that night in 1868 she wrote four stanzas, then left them untouched for almost three years. Finally she completed the poem, added the refrain lines, and had it published in a religious paper.

The first hymnal to include it was the Episcopal hymnal of 1892.

Mary Ann Thomson was born in England, the daughter of an Anglican minister. As a young women she came to America and met and married John Thomson, the first librarian of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

The Thomsons were active members of the Church of the Annunciation in Philadelphia. She was a faithful participant in the life and work of this Episcopal congregation until her death in 1923.

The hymn addresses God's people using the biblical term "Zion," based on the biblical reference "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain" (Isaiah 40:9).

Here is an urgent appeal to God's people to reveal to the world that God is Light and Love.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"The Great Physician Now Is Near"

Dear Deborah

'Pastor acts common'

Dear Deborah:

The new pastor that was sent to our church does not act like a man who was called by God or who was trained in school about what a pastor should do.

He came alone, no papers or superintendent to introduce him to the people of the church.

I am 86 years old, a leader in the church, and I have had a lot of pastors but none so common.

On the first Wednesday evening of Bible study and prayer service he came dressed in shorts too thin to be seen, no socks, just slides for shoes.

He also talks common and cheap.

God is not pleased that the superintendent did not train the man the right way.

What do you think about this situation?

Minnie

Dear Minnie:

A congregation has a right to expect that a pastor who is sent to them is called by God and has the proper education and training.

However, I know of many smaller churches who receive students as their pastors and consider it part of their ministry to gently teach them what they do not seem to learn at seminary.

It can be a challenge if a congregation does not know how to do this.

My observation is that superintendents no longer feel it is part of their job to train pastors or to help new pastors understand that congregations have their own personality and needs.

Both pastors and congregations need time to get to know one another and to learn about the expectations each has for the other.

I am not certain what you mean by "common," but it sounds much like what was said about Jesus.

Please pray for your pastor and your church. Try to talk gently with the new pastor and work things out. Then if all else fails, you have a right to contact first the pastor parish committee and then, if need be, the superintendent and ask for attention to this situation.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Church-state separation finds support

By AUSTIN CARLEY
Religious News Service

BLACKPOOL, England—Separation of the Church of England from its position as the state church, advocated in recent years by liberals in both the church and government, has now won the support of two former chairmen of the ruling Conservative Party.

Cecil Parkinson and Norman Tebbit, who chaired the party during Margaret Thatcher's 11 years as prime minister, both voiced support for the separation of the church from the state recently on the second day of the Conservative Party's five-day national conference.

The announcement was significant because, until now, calls for separation of church and state, or disestablishment, have come primarily from radical or liberal parties. The Conservative Party, on the other hand, has historically been identified with the church, which has often been nicknamed "the Conservative Party at prayer."

Mr. Tebbit said he became convinced of the need for disestablishment last year when he was researching the links between church and state for a BBC interview.

He said he came to agree with those who hold that having a priest of the state church in every parish is "telling people that God wants them to do the king's bidding."

Mr. Parkinson, on the other hand, took a more partisan approach to the issue.

Referring to the criticism of the state by church leaders during the recent Thatcher administration, Mr. Parkinson suggested that the church's links to the state gave such criticisms more prominence.

Former Archbishop Robert Runcie of Canterbury, Bishop David Jenkins of Durham and other Anglican leaders were sharply critical of many of the government's policies during the 1980s.

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William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, Director of Communications
Judy Palermo, editorial assistant

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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A Time I Hope My Beliefs and Actions Will Make a Difference

William B. Oden

The story is told about Abraham Lincoln visiting with some border-state politicians at the start of the Civil War.

They were giving him all their reasons for staying out of the fray. They owned no slaves, they had relatives on both sides, the war would be costly, neither side clearly represented their concerns. "Tell me, Mr. President," one was reported to ask, "why are these issues so important to you?"

His response was that this was a time when one's beliefs and actions would make a difference in the future shape of the nation.

I wish I had some profound word about the elections on November 16. How I would like to offer wisdom and a prophetic word that would make a difference. How sorry I am that religion and race have been exploited in our state when the day calls for bridge building and reconciliation.

I love Louisiana. I love its diversity of terrain, culture, race and religion. I love the fact that Methodists and Catholics, black and white, Jew and gentile all share this land as home. I love its laid-back (a bit unprotestant) festivals.

I weep for Louisiana. It is a land whose rich rivers and beautiful bayous have been ravaged and polluted; whose people have been exploited; whose religions and races are still pained by oppression; whose cities and towns are undergoing rapid change too complex to easily understand.

So I will take my clue from Mr. Lincoln and vote hoping that my beliefs and actions on November 16 will make a difference in the future shape of our state.

William B. Oden

Fall Brings Relief to Spring's Disasters

The recent dry spell across Louisiana has helped facilitate repairs to churches and homes hard hit by these torrential rains and tornadoes of the spring.

In the Southeastern section of the Acadiana District, relief efforts by the Rev. Henry Bowdon and the Terrebonne ministerial association continue. Funding from Methodist sources have topped the $15,000 mark. These funds combined with other church contributions and volunteer labor have helped some 800 families return to their homes. According to Mr. Bowdon most relief efforts should be completed by Christmas.

In the Monroe District, the Rev. Jim Wilson established a non-profit organization to respond to the extensive flooding in the eleven-parish area. Contributions from United Methodist sources exceeded $10,000. While relief efforts have moved steadily along there is much work to be completed. In this area winter is expected to highlight the remaining problems. If your group or organization has an interest in having a work camp associated with disaster relief, contact Mr. Wilson.

Caney Lake Camp, hard hit by a tornado, is once again in operation according to officials. However, it will be some length of time before all repairs will be finished. The fallen trees have all been removed with only the stumps remaining. These stumps eventually will be replaced with new trees. Elsewhere over the Conference numerous communities are being responded to on an as-needed-basis by their local pastors.

The Rev. Tom Howe, chairperson for the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee says, "that while some churches received some damage and a few churches received extreme damage, most churches are back in normal operation." Mr. Howe would like to thank all people and churches who gave their time and money to these relief efforts. He is also grateful for the $50,000 grant given by UMCOR for Louisiana relief as well as the conference special offerings over the past five years that paid for church property repairs.

Offerings for Disaster Relief may be made through your monthly apportionment sheets.

Around the Conference

A check for $4,000 was presented to Mr. Edward Lang, administer of the Lafon Nursing Home, last January during the 7th Annual Meeting of the Lafon Auxiliary. Mrs. Myraline Jamison is president of the Auxiliary.

Recently, the United Methodist Women of the First UMC in Slidell made and donated two-dozen blankets to Rainbow Child Care Center. The Center enables low-income mothers to attend school by providing child-care facilities. Pictured are (l. to r.) Ms. Gail Campbell, Ms. Leona Sura, Ms. Jan Randolph and Ms. Gail Epperson. The Rev. Dr. Joe W. McClain is the pastor of First Church.

The Senior Citizens Annual Picnic sponsored by the Boyce Union Chapel United Methodist Church's Outreach Program was a huge success. The picnic was held August 17, at Indian Creek. Various games followed by a talent show showed off the many talents of the group. Approximately fifty seniors attended and participated in the gala event. The pastor of Union Chapel is the Rev. Hurvey Sweaize, Jr.

A reception was held Sunday, June 30th, to welcome the Rev. Phillip Woodland as the new District Superintendent of the Monroe District. Pictured above are Dr. Woodland and his wife Madeline in the Fellowship Hall of the Rayville UMC. The reception was planned by the laity of the Monroe District. The Rev. Frank M. Jones was the host pastor.

A United Methodist Church historical marker, along with two other plaques, were dedicated on Heritage Sunday at First United Methodist Church in Plaquemine. One plaque commemorates the work of long-time benefactor Charles F. Bean and the other gives a historical explanation for the designation awarded the church. Pictured (l. to r.) are: Mr. John Evans, chairperson of the Administrative Council; the Rev. Dick Scott-Welch, former pastor of the church; and Dr. Sarah Kreutziger, member of the Conference Commission on Archives and History. The Rev. Weldon C. Bares is the current pastor of the church.

Fourth Annual Pastors' Fellowship Retreat Slated

Dr. William Colton

The Fourth Annual Rural Pastors' Retreat (for rural pastors and pastors of small membership churches) will be held on March 23-24, 1992, at the Uskichitto Retreat Center near Le Blanc. The forthcoming retreat will feature the Rev. Dr. William "Bill" Cotton as the resource leader. Dr. Cotton is the pastor of the Grace United Methodist Church in Des Moines, Iowa. He has served as district superintendent of the Creston District and has been assigned as missioner for town & rural ministries.

In his presentations, Dr. Cotton will discuss the church in the 90's as it relates to small membership churches. Two major themes are: "Our sickness is not unto death" (the church re-discovers the power of resurrectional faith) and "Called To Walk Through Walls" (the pastor as transformational leader). His thoughts will be reflective of John's gospel.

Registration fee for the event will be $5.00. One (1.0) CEU credit will be offered. Registration forms will be available through our conference mailing. The Rev. T. R. Bergeron, Sr. OSL, pastor of Pharr Chapel will serve as dean and the Rev. Darryl Tate, pastor of First U.M.C., Kinder, will serve as registrar.

New Advent, Christmas Resources Released

Available from Cokesbury, new Advent season releases from UM publishers include: two Advent studies for adults, two plays, a collection of 50 individuals' Christmas stories, and a new edition of a Christmas classic.

For adult groups, the five-session study **Journey to Bethlehem** ($2.75; $2.25 each for six or more copies) focuses on five wonderful gifts that God gives to the world through Christ.

Prepare Ye for a New Advent of God's Love in Our World (participant's notebook, $4.95; leader's guide, $6.95), an Upper Room Books publication, offers adult groups fun but thought-provoking exercises that help bring alive the power of the Advent/Christmas message.

Journey to the Manger by Barbara T. Rowland ($3.95) is a 45-minute play with three characters, each from a different period in time, who meet in Bethlehem the night of Jesus' birth. Another Abingdon Press drama, **The Reason for the Season** by Linda Marsh ($2.95), lets you involve many persons of all ages while giving them short, easily learned parts.

"A No-Fuss Christmas Pageant" is provided in the UM curriculum resource **Leader in the Church School Today**. A December article in **Teacher in the Church Today** helps children's teachers find ways to use the creche scene in the classroom.

Advent-related themes in UM children's curriculum are "Christmas" in materials for infants-toddlers and age 2 children, "Get Ready — A Savior Is Coming" in all other ages' **Invitation** resources, and "Songs for a Savior" in all **Bible Lessons** resources.

For youth, winter quarter curriculum themes include "God Was Incarnate in Jesus" in **Trek: Life-centered Bible Studies** resources.

Information on ordering any of the above items may be obtained from your nearest Cokesbury store or by calling 1-800-672-1789.

Churches Celebrate Anniversaries

Fifty years ago, a group of concerned Methodists in Harahan, under the sponsorship of the Rev. Elmer Gunn and the Rev. William Von Volkenburgh, established a church. On Sunday, November 10, St. Paul's UMC will honor the occasion of their founding with a Jubilee Celebration with a worship service followed by a luncheon. Friends, families and all interested people are invited to attend. The Rev. James R. Schaub is St. Paul's pastor.

Seventy-five years earlier, another church was founded during the same month in Baton Rouge. This year Wesley UMC celebrates its 125th anniversary November 3-11. Bishop W. T. Handy, Jr., who presides over the Missouri East and West Annual Conference, will preach at Wesley's Founders' Day Worship Service, Sunday, November 10th. The theme for the week-long observance is GLORIFYING OUR 125 YEAR LEGACY; COMMITMENT, DEDICATION AND SERVICE.

All activities of the celebration will be held at the church located at 544 Government Street. The Rev. Freddie C. Henderson is Wesley's pastor.

Lay Speaker School Attracts 56

The New Orleans District Lay Speakers' School, held October 11-12 at Parker UMC in New Orleans, was deemed a huge success by District Coordinator Irene Reed. "There were 56 people in attendance, a 10% increase over last year," Mrs. Reed said.

The three courses offered were taught by the Rev. Doug Ezell, pastor of Parker; the Rev. Abraham Davis, pastor of First Street UMC; and Mr. Wadsworth Davis, layman. A worship service concluded the program. The Rev. George Duerson, District Superintendent, congratulated the classes for their efforts.

Editorial

Are you 'addicted' to religion?

Do you have a "religious addiction"?

According to a recent news report, the Rev. Leo Booth, an Episcopalian minister of Long Beach, Calif., contends that religion is one of our nation's most pervasive addictions.

Mr. Booth conducts seminars nationwide to help people overcome obsessive behavior rooted in a belief that God directs their every movement and thought. As an example, he cites people so obsessed with religion that they can't make a telephone call without saying, "The Lord told me to call."

We agree that Mr. Booth has identified a real problem. Like all dimensions of human experience, religion can be misused. Jesus teaches us, for example, that merely uttering "Lord, Lord" doesn't constitute an authentic expression of faith. Likewise looking upon God as a cosmic "errand boy" to do one's bidding is unhealthy.

Whether one labels such conduct as hypocrisy, false piety, or religious addiction, it amounts to the same thing: a form of self-worship that attempts to manipulate God for one's own ends.

However, we also see a danger in Mr. Booth's "diagnosis." His reliance almost entirely on psychological terms such as "addiction" and "treatment" fail to address what is basically a theological problem.

As Christians, we should insist that overcoming unhealthy behavior requires more than a trendy "recovery from addiction." Rather, a more basic need, to be lifted up in worship and addressed via prayer, is for "conversion:" turning from worship of self to worship of the One who gives authentic fulfillment and meaning to life.

Unfortunately, the propensity—frequently found even among Christians—to explain and deal with human life primarily in psychological terms pervades secular culture.

We believe, however, that such an approach is less likely to address life's root problems and more likely to result in the reality and insights of religious faith not being taken seriously.

For example, following Mr. Booth's logic, the belief that God is intimately involved with all aspects of life is seen merely as an addiction to be treated rather than a reality to be experienced. In his scheme it would be unhealthy to pray with our Lord "give us this day our daily bread," or to sing "This is my Father's world"!

We, as Christians, must be alert to such subtle dismissals of the distinctive reality of life's spiritual dimension. When that reality is casually dismissed, as it so often is in a secular culture, it merely reinforces the prevailing skepticism toward the proclamation of God's active presence in the world.

We should be grateful to people such as Mr. Booth who remind us of the unhealthiness of acting as though we've got God in our hip pocket. But we also should affirm the health-giving practice of regularly looking to God for guidance, comfort and strength.

Letters to the Editor

'Political correctness' threatens Bible study

I am concerned about threats to the integrity of our faith in the face of what may be the continuing deterioration of academic freedom on American university campuses.

If the widely publicized "political correctness" movement is as widespread and powerful as it is reported to be in the top universities of our nation, biblical scholarship is in danger.

The integrity of our faith depends upon Bible scholarship as an academic discipline unfettered by political winds.

There are political forces presently working to alter long-accepted Bible doctrine. These forces are not supported by a consensus of Bible scholars.

But there appears to be an organized attempt to politicize Bible scholarship, and this may succeed in influencing those academics.

John Brawthen
Mound, Minnesota

Christians should adopt

This is in response to the Oct. 18 "Here I Stand" by Douglas Williams.

Thirty-eight years ago, my wife and I thought that our infertility was the greatest possible tragedy and heartache. Now, after raising, from infancy, three of the most wonderful adopted children, who have given us a houseful of the greatest grandchildren, we know it to be God's finest blessing.

Since the world is so full of starving infants and children in Asia, Africa, South America, etc., I believe it to be more Christian for even fertile couples to adopt.

If this sounds a little self-righteous coming from one forced to adopt, it is still true. Perhaps, even the money spent on fertility clinics and the sympathy spent on the infertile would be better invested in the masses of starving children already born.

Robert L. Irwin
Wilmington, North Carolina

Is 32 percent so bad?

In the Oct. 11 issue, an article by Associate Editor Denise Johnson Stovall bemoans the fact that "only 32 percent" of local congregations reported that their lay leaders were female.

Is this something awful, or bad for Christianity? Do people not realize that multitudes of women are home bearing children and keeping the race alive, that they are busy faithfully raising their families to grow into the kind of men and women God intends?

Do we not realize that women are more sensitive to spiritual concerns than many men, and that unless we can challenge men in their leadership responsibilities, we are going to have a female church?

If this kind of survey is the sort of thing that occupies the time and efforts of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, we are wasting precious World Service Funds in secondary and questionable matters.

Tom Pendell
Balboa, California

Women affirmed

I dispute the statement made by Eugene C. Kennedy in the article which appeared in the Oct. 4 issue of the Reporter regarding abortion.

He says that women are motivated in the battle for choice by men who are trying to control their lives. The woman has an advantage in why she was first made by God who could see that the male was incomplete without the companionship and spiritual support of the woman.

As the counselors and supporters of men, women have a place in society no one can take over. But they have disregarded all that and are struggling under the term "freedom of choice" to convince humankind that they are everything a man is and can do anything he can do. This is an illusion where men are left stranded and womanhood is fading away.

Women need to face the reality of what they really are and perfect that strength and equality they already have but are throwing away!

Marian Porter
Houston, Texas

Logo change denounced

I have been reading of a proposed change in the logo for the United Methodist Publishing House from the long familiar Circuit Rider to a dove (see UMR, Oct. 4).

I don't understand why such a change is even being considered and I strongly object to it. The dove is a commonly accepted symbol of peace and is widely used as such. But there is nothing directly suggesting Methodism about it nor the idea of learning. The Circuit Rider with his open book suggests both.

Let us never cease to acknowledge the contribution made by the Circuit Rider nor to honor their memory for it.

Ruth M. Vernon
Dallas, Texas

The Reporter welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be brief, must be original and must carry the signature and address of the author.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Faithfully yours

'Star Trek' creator shared vision of shalom

My friend Gene's death Oct. 24 caught me unprepared.

Cynthia B. Astle

I say he was a friend because that's the way the creator of "Star Trek," Gene Roddenberry, treated me from the moment we met 10 years ago.

As an impressionable teenager in 1966, I had been enthralled by the first incarnation of what has become one of the most popular television and film series of the late 20th century.

When my chance came as a journalist to meet Gene five years later, I jumped at it.

What I remember most from our meeting—and from the brief notes we exchanged occasionally in the years since—were his gracious respect for everyone he met and his shining, unshakeable belief in a hopeful future for humankind.

Although we did not share, to the best of my knowledge, the same religious faith, Gene's vision of the future drew me because it exemplified my own Christian understanding of God's *shalom*, the peaceful interrelated wholeness of all creation.

Gene gave us television's multi-racial, multi-ethnic cast; first interracial kiss; first women in responsible, non-subservient roles; first visions of a universe that survived the threat of nuclear annihilation.

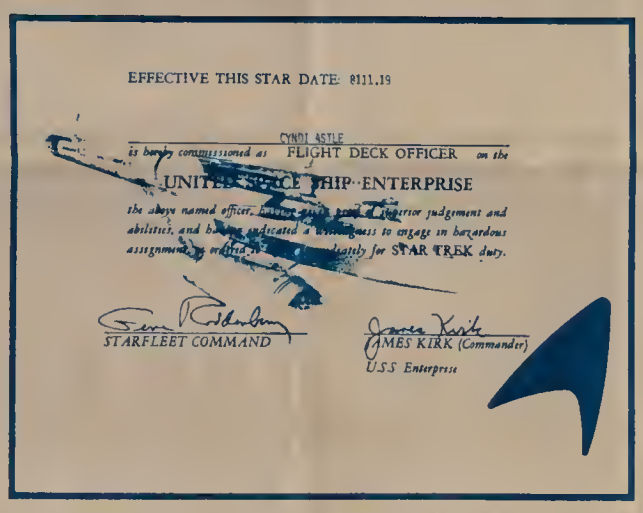
The newest "Star Trek" versions have moved on to the themes of Gene's maturity: our search for God, how we relate to each other, how we face life and death.

The presence of such themes in these stories has been a joy and a comfort to me. With confidence and gratitude I've steered my family toward "Star Trek," where Gene's characters make their way honorably through life's conflicts.

Ten years ago, after his speaking engagement in Florida, I wrote a column about how much Gene had inspired his audience. I sent him a copy.

A few weeks later, a brown envelope arrived containing a thank-you note from Gene and my "commission" as a flight deck officer on the Starship Enterprise.

As I write this, my Enterprise commission, yellowed with age inside its black frame, sits on my desk next to a photocopy of Gene's obituary.



EFFECTIVE THIS STAR DATE: 8111.19

CYNDI ASTLE
is hereby commissioned as FLIGHT DECK OFFICER on the
UNITED STARSHIP ENTERPRISE
the above named officer, having [illegible] superior judgement and abilities, and having indicated a willingness to engage in hazardous assignments [illegible] STAR TREK duty.

STARFLEET COMMAND

JAMES KIRK (Commander)
U.S.S. Enterprise

This "commission" as a flight deck officer on the Starship Enterprise is a reminder of how much better the world is because the creator of 'Star Trek' lived out his beliefs and shared them with others.

They speak to me of how much better the world is because Gene Roddenberry lived out his beliefs and shared them with others.

His legacy to me is the reminder that I am called to do the same with my own.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Ms. Astle is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

What others are saying

"I would define entertainment as music attracting attention to itself rather than the words. In church music there is a focus on music and text. The Word is always the end, music is the means. Music should provide a halo around the text."

—Sacred music composer and publisher Robert Wetzler.

* * *

"Is it too much to ask that we minister to each other during the hours we spend together at work by showing understanding and compassion, by offering advice and support? Do we have to go home to be human?"

—Catholic layman Thomas S. Johnson, former president of Manufacturers Hanover Trust.

* * *

"The inactive church members in our study were considerably more likely than active church members to be critical of the speaking ability of the clergy. Most in this category do not remember sermons or worship services speaking to them in meaningful ways. Some of those who had simply drifted away from the church did not feel that they were missing much by their absence."

—Steven E. Clapp, "Ministerial Competency Report."

* * *

"When I talk to salt-of-the-earth folks, there is a rising chorus of 'Why must we be so negative toward ourselves? Whatever happened to joy?' We can differ and criticize each other in love and respect."

—Presiding Bishop Herbert Chilstrom, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Here I Stand

Please, don't get personal during communion

By DAVID C. PAUL

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. The Rev. David C. Paul is a retired ministerial member of the Southwest Texas Annual Conference.

Reverently holding a fragment of the broken bread in my hand, I stood before the chalice, about to dip the host in the wine when the server blurted out, "Amen!"

I reeled back a half step, but I recovered sufficiently enough to dip the bread in the cup and return to my chair—shocked out of the mood of worship.

That experience of a few years ago introduced me to the new styles in worship which have become the usual at retreats and at district and annual conference meetings, and, I suppose, customary by now in many local churches.

I much prefer the solemnity of kneeling at the altar rail to receive the elements of the Lord's Supper. Whether I receive the elements from a server or reach for them myself makes little difference to me. I prefer the reverent posture of kneeling. Something precious and profound is lost in stroll-by communion.

Also, I do not like for the server to address me by name or do anything else to get my personal attention. That is crass. Even worse, it is an unwarranted intrusion into my inner self.

Getting my personal attention, looking me straight in the eye and calling me by name, diverts my attention away from worship.

I suppose this name calling is supposed to make the sacrament more personal. But for me, it emphasizes the presence of the server. Furthermore, it de-sanctifies the moment, and worship is lost.

"David, this is the body of Christ."

This statement, when spoken by the server, in addition to interrupting my mood of worship, is redundant and out of order. The words of institution have already been spoken in the proper ritual context. It is as if the server were trying to infuse meaning and relevance into an otherwise limp and useless occasion.

For me the sacrament has power and authority of its own. We ought to conduct the service in devout faith and good order and trust God to make it meaningful and give it power.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Jesus said to him, '. . .All things can be done for the one who believes.' Immediately the father of the children cried out, 'I believe; help my unbelief!' "

Book _____ *Chapter* ____ : *Verse* ____

(Last week's answer: Mark 8:34)

Readings for week of Nov. 10

Monday: Psalms 146:1-7
Tuesday: Psalms 146:8-10
Wednesday: Daniel 7:9-10
Thursday: Daniel 7:11-14
Friday: Mark 12:38-40
Saturday: Mark12:41-44
Sunday: Hebrews 9:24-28

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Faith watch

FUNDS APPROVED: In an emergency telephone conference call Oct. 31, the executive committee of United Methodism's General Council on Finance and Administration authorized release of $289,000 from the Africa University Fund. Officials said $183,000 is earmarked to purchase 12 buildings from the Zimbabwe Annual Conference. These will be used for temporary classrooms, cafeteria and faculty offices when the school opens in March 1992. Another $106,000 was also released, of which $37,000 is for renovation supplies and $27,000 is for two vehicles (a pickup truck and a station wagon). The rest, $42,000, will go to the Zimbabwe conference to offset relocation costs for the agricultural mission now occupying the site.

LOCAL DECISION: A local United Methodist church through its administrative board has both the right and duty to decide what categories of financial contributions will be accepted and what money can or cannot be channeled to other recipients, the church's highest court ruled recently. The question arose out of the North Carolina Annual Conference where a local church administrative board specified seven official local, regional and denominationwide categories for which money would be accepted. A lay member and his wife subsequently wanted to send money through the church to an unofficial United Methodist-related program outside the approved list.

DISAPPOINTMENT: Last week's paper-thin defeat of the Rev. **Michael Kinnamon** to become general minister and president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) caused the Rev. **Jeanne Audrey Powers,** associate general secretary of the United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, to call it "a deep disappointment—even a tragedy—of profound significance for the whole ecumenical church." Dr. Kinnamon, 42-year-old dean of Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, Ky., is one of two members of the UMC's ecumenical agency representing "partner churches" in the Consultation on Church Union.

ACCESS GRANTED: Bowing reluctantly to the recent breaking of the scholarly monopoly on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Israeli Antiquities Authority has announced that it will grant scholars free access to photographs of the ancient Jewish manuscripts. The scrolls—800 documents that were written between about 200 B.C. and 50 A.D.—contain numerous biblical texts plus other material that illustrates the diversity of Judaism at the time that Christianity was born. The papyrus and leather documents were discovered in Jordanian territory between 1947 and 1956 and have since been restricted to a small number of scholars.

LOOK INWARD: The Church of England, a strong critic of the government's failure to improve relations between the races, has turned a race-relations magnifying glass on itself. A highly critical report prepared by the church's Black Anglican Concerns Committee claims that black Anglicans have suffered rejection and discrimination at the hands of the church. Entitled "Seeds of Hope," the report charges that most Anglican churches in Britain have failed to educate about long-held racial prejudices or train clergy and laity in promoting good relations between the races. The report, based in part on the life experiences of black church members, is to be debated in November at the church's General Synod, its highest policy-making body.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Zairean expects 'everything to be gone'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—United Methodist laywoman Yema Luhahi of Kinshasha, Zaire, sat patiently throughout all sessions of the church's General Board of Global Ministries last month, but her mind strayed from mission matters to the welfare of her children.

Like most mothers away from home, Ms. Luhahi worried if her three youngsters had eaten that day and if they were receiving proper care. But this time Ms. Luhahi had reason to be extra concerned. Her children were left in the midst of a national crisis in Zaire.

Two days after Ms. Luhahi left Zaire to attend meetings of the mission board's Women's and World Divisions and of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, soldiers claiming they had not been paid began to loot her city.

Rioting spread as citizens protesting the economic policies of Zaire President Mobutu Sese Seko left the cities in ruins.

By the end of September all United Methodist mission facilities in Zaire had been destroyed and all 46 missionaries and their families had been evacuated from the country (see UMR Oct. 11).

Last week, according to "The New York Times," all foreigners had left the central African country.

Faces country's despair

Ms. Luhahi told the Reporter that she is anxiously waiting to go home but does not look forward to her country's despair.

"If I am able to return directly to my country, I expect everything to be gone," said Ms. Luhahi, a professor at Istm Nursing School in the capital city of Kinshasha.

"Nothing will be left. Even if my school is still standing, I will be out of a job, because my students will not have money to come to school. And if they did come to school, we would have nothing to feed them or no place for the students to stay."

Also awaiting an opportunity to return home to Kinshasha following the mission board meeting is Bishop Fama Onema (Central Zaire Area), who administers the West Zaire, Northeast Zaire and Central Zaire Annual Conferences.

His is one of the church's three episcopal areas in Zaire, and on Oct. 22 UMCOR approved $30,000 for the three areas to purchase emergency items. Earlier UMCOR had given $3,000.

Doreen F. Tilghman, chief executive for the mission board's Africa, Europe and Middle East office, said medicine is in short supply in Zaire. A large supply of vaccines has been stockpiled in Kinshasha but there is no distribution system to deliver the supply, she said.

Yema Luhahi
. . . concerned for children

"Food was available within the country, but the cost and lack of accessibility was causing widespread hunger," said Ms. Tilghman. "There is also a shortage of protein foodstuffs."

The Rev. Julius Jefferson, also of the mission board's Africa office, told the Reporter that the World Division has not received word from Bishop Ngoy Kimba Wakadilo (North Shaba Conference), "but all indication is that he is not in danger."

Missionaries back in U.S.

However, Bishop Kainda Katembo (Southern Zaire Conference) has decided that it will be in his best interest to leave the country, said Mr. Jefferson. Bishop Katembo was expected to attend the United Methodist Council of Bishops meeting this week at Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Meanwhile most Zaire missionaries are back in the United States, but 17 are in other parts of Africa. Five have taken assignments in Zambia, 10 are in Kenya, and two are in Burundi.

Zaire missionaries in the U.S. will meet at Lake Junaluska Nov. 9-12, to reflect on their experiences and assess that country's current situation.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The political upheaval in Zaire and its related stories of corruption and violence will be featured on Nov. 10 and 24 editions of the United Methodist national television program, "Catch the Spirit." Included will be a number of interviews with United Methodist leaders in Zaire taped earlier this year when a film crew visited that country.

Cholera hits Zaire area

The United Methodist Committee on Relief has approved a request from the church's bishop of Southern Zaire for an emergency $57,500 to combat a cholera epidemic in his area.

In letter to UMCOR project executive the Rev. R. Dean Hancock dated Oct. 4 and received in UMCOR offices in New York Oct. 24, Bishop Kainda Katembo said his country is "unfortunately once more in turmoil, both economically and politically.

"Now as if these are not enough already, we have a very serious health problem as well. Kasenga and Pweto-Kilwa [towns in Zaire] already stricken by cholera last year, the terrible disease hit again."

The grant is expected to be used as follows:

- $6,750 for equipment (includes beds, sheets, buckets);
- $45,500 for medicines (including serums and vitamins);
- $5,250 for transportation.

Financial gifts to assist Zaire United Methodists in this crisis can be sent to **Advance No. 198400-4**, designated for Zaire Emergency.

'Growth Plus' program pays off for churches

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

Looking for a way to spark both numerical growth and spiritual depth in your United Methodist congregation?

According to newly released statistics, "Growth Plus" might be what you're looking for.

Like unexpected blossoms on a withered branch, some 73 United Methodist congregations have shown significant one-year membership increases by following "Growth Plus," developed by the church's General Board of Discipleship Section on Evangelism.

A statistical report released recently by the Rev. Warren J. Hartman, Discipleship research consultant, shows that the 73 congregations involved in "Growth Plus" since 1988 have shown an average annual membership increase between 30 and 60 members, along with increases in other areas of participation (see accompanying statistical table).

The statistics were prepared by Dr. Hartman from reports of pastors involved in the program. The numbers provide the first measurable evidence that "Growth Plus" is proving effective in its participating congregations.

Dr. Hartman said "Growth Plus" includes both time-honored and innovative elements that pertain to numerical growth and spiritual development.

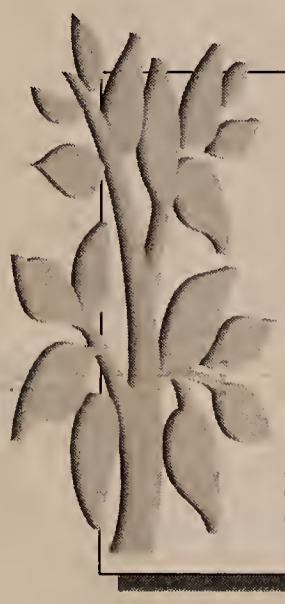
For instance, a "Growth Plus Worship Attendance Crusade" booklet invites participants to "pray daily and expect growth, be present each Sunday during Worship Attendance Crusade, and invite one person to worship each Sunday."

As defined in the "Growth Plus" manual, measurable growth factors include attendance, membership, Sunday school enrollment, assessment of "constituency" (those who participate in or are served by church activities but are not members) and other "church population" data.

The "plus" factors—which aren't as easy to measure—reflect "a wide range of human response to God's mighty acts," Dr. Hartman explained in his report.

These experiences include personal relationships with God and others, spiritual disciplines, obedience and faithfulness to one's understanding of God's will, witnessing and virtually limitless ways in which Christians serve others.

While the growth factors and the "plus" factors differ, they are interrelated, Dr. Hartman continued.



One Year's Growth of 'Growth Plus' Churches

	Size of Congregations				
Category	Under 200	200-400	500-999	1,000-Plus	All
Members	94	537	944	3,532	5,107
Avg.	31.3	23.3	41	147.2	69.9
Worship	86	525	397	1,804	2,812
Avg.	28.6	22.8	17.3	75.2	38.5
S. School	46	130.	282	278	736
Avg.	15.3	5.6	12.3	11.6	10.1
Baptisms	15	67	91	176	349
Avg.	5	2.9	3.9	7.3	4.8

These statistics are excerpted from tables prepared by the Rev. Warren J. Hartman, research consultant for the General Board of Discipleship

UMR ILLUSTRATION

"For example, the most reliable leading indicator of the [potential] number of professions of faith is the number of children who attend Sunday school," the statistician explained.

"As new Christians respond in faith and love to God's presence in their lives, attendance and participation in the activities of the institutional church increase."

Dr. Hartman cautioned that while the one-year growth figures are encouraging, the real test of the "Growth Plus" program lies ahead.

That test involves how well the congregations improve and sustain their Christian education programs.

Dr. Hartman said his caution about the encouraging one-year growth figures comes from the fact that the "Growth Plus" congregations have shown negligible rises in children's classes and overall Sunday school participation.

In fact, the number of those enrolled in confirmation classes in "Growth Plus" churches—a statistical average of 12.8 persons—is slightly below the average—13—for all United Methodist congregations.

"The above data suggest that the probability of maintaining consistent long-term growth would be enhanced by the incorporation of a strong emphasis on the critical importance of confirmation and the development of strong Sunday schools, especially the children's department, to provide the biblical, theological and faith development which are foundational for maturation in the faith," Dr. Hartman concluded.

Children of Alcoholics find support in UM-sponsored camp

By WILLIAM H. MOYER JR.
United Methodist News Service

WINDSOR, N.Y.—Olivia, 14, has learned that the alcoholism that tainted her life was not her fault.

Olivia speaks with a maturity that belies her youthfulness when she tells of her experiences and pain of living in the home of an alcoholic.

After her parents' divorce, "Mom met this other guy, but he was an alcoholic. He would get drunk and beat up my mom . . . She was in the hospital twice in one day. He'd hit me sometimes, too," she said recently.

Olivia was attending a Children of Alcoholics (COA) camp sponsored by United Methodism's Wyoming Annual Conference, which encompasses northeastern Pennsylvania and southern New York.

'At first I was scared'

"When I first came here (four years ago), I was scared," she said. But at the camp at Sky Lake, the conference's camping facility, she gained self-esteem through her contact with others—children, teenagers and adults—whose lives are also colored by alcoholism.

And, she added softly, "My mom finally left him. He begged her to come back, but he only kept beating her."

A "Camping Magazine" story about a similar camp six years ago sparked the interest of the Rev. Lisa Jean Hoefner, a pastor in the conference and then associate council director for camping. She showed the story to Herbert Smith, a layman who then headed the conference's family life council, suggesting that a similar camp be added to the camping schedule.

Mr. Smith, a recovering alcoholic, had a personal interest in the effects of alcohol on children.

"I've seen what this disease does to children . . . Children in alcoholic households are 40 percent more likely to become alcoholics than children from non-alcoholic households," he said.

Only 16 children attended the first COA camp in 1985, but "we had 35 the second year," Mr. Smith said.

'We knew there was a need'

"The camp wasn't too well known, and we didn't really have a program, but we knew there was a need for what we wanted to do."

A grant from a conference fund for new ministries subsidized the camp in early years while a program was developed and awareness about it increased. The camp's scope was broadened to include children of other substance abusers, and social services agencies in Pennsylvania and New York began to refer children to the camp.

This year's camp reached a capacity of 114 children. All its counselors are recovering substance abusers or adults with family members who are substance abusers.

"It's hard to get embarrassed here," said Chris, 14, who attended his first camp this summer. "I don't have this many friends at home."

"It's a lot better than being at home," added his cousin, Kevin, also 14. "Nobody makes fun of you."

Sherry, a counselor who is a former camper, empathizes with the campers. Her days as a camper were a time of seeking refuge from the turmoil of alcohol in her household.

'I know what that feels like'

When she heard a girl crying in the night, "I felt so bad; I know what that feels like. You cry and you just want someone to come and hold you."

Sherry did just that for the distressed camper.

PHOTO COURTESY WYOMING CONFERENCE

Sherry, a counselor, and Marci at The Wyoming Annual Conference camp for Children of Alcoholics.

"In the morning, everything was OK—for now," she said.

As she recalled her own days in an alcoholic household, Sherry's eyes filled with tears and her voice dropped to a whisper.

"I remember how I acted like everything in my home was normal . . . I see a lot of myself in all of them.

"I want to give back something that was given to me when I first came here."

Mr. Moyer is associate council director for communications for the United Methodist Wyoming Annual Conference in Binghamton, N.Y.

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Faith connections

NEW VIDEO: A new United Methodist Communications video intended to dispel fears about the abilities of physically challenged clergy was previewed at the recent meeting of the 48-member General Commission on Communications in Nashville. "Claiming the Promise," produced by **Don Hughes**, cbronicles the work and lives of the Rev. **Kathy Reeves** of Oak Park, Ill.; the Rev. **Robert Walker** of Moscow, Idaho; and the Rev. **Edwin Arthur** of Ossining, N.Y. Ms. Reeves has a sight impairment; Mr. Walker, sight and hearing impairments; and Mr. Artbur uses a wbeelchair.

MISSION PERSONNEL UPDATE: A total of 1,326 United Methodist missionaries are in international or national service, reports the Rev. **John L. McCullough**, chief executive of the church's Mission Personnel Resources Program. That figure includes 733 with the General Board of Global Ministries World Division; 308 with the board's National Division, and 285 missionaries with "partner churches". Dr. McCullough also reported that 586 groups and individuals have served in volunteer-in-mission programs between April and October 1991.

TREASURER ELECTED: The United Methodist General Board of Pensions has elected **F. Gale Whitson-Schmidt** treasurer and chief financial officer. She has been with the pensions board since 1973. She will head the board's financial services division, which includes the treasury, portfolio and corporate relations and social concerns departments.

UMCOR GIVING: As of Aug. 31, 23 annual conferences have given at least $100,000 eacb to emergency appeals by the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Top donor through the church's second-mile Advance giving is the West Michigan Annual Conference with $320,403. That averages at $3.86 per church member in tbat conference.

NEW NAVAJO SCHOOL: A new high school run by the Navajo Nation has begun operations at the site of the former Navajo Academy in Farmington, N.M. Through a lease agreement with the church's General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division which owns the land, the Navajo Preparatory School opened in September for some 180 students on the 100-acre New Mexico campus. Under the new agreement, the Navajo Nation leases property from the Women's Division until 1994. The mission board's National Division—which had administered a school on the property from 1964-1978 when enrollment declined—will offer spiritual enrichment programs for students on a designated section of the campus. Church and community worker **Keith Heinly** is the on-site administrator of the National Division program.

HOUSES FOR PANAMA: Forty-eight houses have been completed in Panama with the assistance of 22 United Methodist Volunteer-in-Mission teams from all five of the cburch's regional jurisdictions in the U.S. **William Rollins**, who heads the national Volunteers-in-Mission office in New York, said tbe homes will be dedicated Nov. 16 in Panama. The families had been living in airport hangars since the invasion of Panama two years ago.

JUST FOR WOMEN DELEGATES: Orientation for women delegates to the 1992 United Methodist General Conference is scheduled for Tuesday morning, May 5, in the Louisville (Ky.) Convention Center. It's co-sponsored by tbe church's General Commission of the Status and Role of Women and the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. About 500 participants, delegates and reserve delegates are expected to attend.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Setting membership growth goals for Africa

Development fund director asks: 'How many of 393 million new Christians will be UMs?'

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

The Rev. Nathan Frank Goto of Zimbabwe says he knows how to boost United Methodist membership: Increase financial support of church growth programs in Africa.

"In 1986, the continent of Africa was estimated to have 630 million people—230 of which became Christian," said Dr. Goto, director of the Africa Church Growth and Development Fund.

"By the year 2000, Africa is expected to have 900 million people, and 393 million are expected to become Christian.

"So tbe question I have for The United Methodist Church is: 'How many of that 393 million will be United Methodists?"

Fund is 11 years old

For 11 years the Africa Church Growth and Development Fund has been a priority program of United Methodists through the Advance for Christ and His Church, the church's second-mile giving program. Dr. Goto has promoted tbe fund since 1983.

A former teacher and superintendent of schools in the Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, Dr. Goto also served as an elected director of the church's General Board of Global Ministries from 1980-88.

The African clergyman said there are two main reasons why the Africa Church Growth and Development Fund was created:

■ Africa is such a large continent that the only African church leaders who had access to updates on church growth in the United Methodist Church were bishops. And the only formal way for African United Methodists to meet was during General and Central Conferences.

■ African United Methodists wanted to work together with their brothers and sisters in Europe and the U.S. to raise money for new African church programs, based on recommendations from each country.

The General Board of Global Ministries will ask the 1992 General Conference to continue the Africa Church Growth and Development project for another four years and that a goal of $3 million per year be approved for the quadrennium.

Promoted in eight nations

As the current director of this development program, Dr. Goto is responsible for promoting ministries of United Methodists in eight African countries: Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zaire, and Zimbabwe.

Once a year, 26 representatives from annual conferences in those eight countries meet to report on the growth of United Methodism in their respective countries. A recent World Division report said in 1989, there were at least 1.1 million United Methodists in Africa.

The development fund has also allowed representation from Nigeria. Although there is no annual conference in Nigeria, Dr. Goto said that country is viewed as an area of exceptional growth for the denomination. A Nigerian United Methodist bishop is expected to be elected in 1992.

African-Americans' 'baby'

Dr. Goto told the Reporter that his program is unique to the general church because "it is the baby of *African-Americans.*"

"This program was first a baby of the black caucus [Black Methodists for Church Renewal] and was later adopted by the whole church in 1980," he said. "So we feel that black churches should be reminded of that history and encouraged to give financial support."

Funds raised by United Methodists in Africa, Europe, the United States and Puerto Rico are combined to help African United Methodists "help themselves." Financial gifts are given for church construction, leadership development and evangelism.

Some goals accomplished

During the past decade the Africa Church Growth and Development Fund has accomplished such goals as:

■ 35 Land Cruisers for church leaders,

■ 6 bicycles for local pastors,

■ 8 buildings for annual conferences,

■ 250 evangelism short courses, serving some 2,500 participants,

■ 54 motor bikes for pastors to travel to their churches,

■ 28 parsonages built,

■ 27 buildings for women's programs built,

■ 145 church buildings completed,

■ 3 trucks purchased for mission work,

■ 190 scholarships for students to study in African countries,

■ 50 scholarships for students to study overseas, then return to their homelands to educate others.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

The Rev. Nathan Frank Goto says that United Methodists have an opportunity to increase church membership by supporting evangelism and church growth efforts in Africa.

Expert: Read Revelation with 'disciplined imagination'

By M. GARLINDA BURTON
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—With its descriptions of flying horsemen, sea monsters and Christ with a two-edged sword swinging from his mouth, the biblical Book of Revelation continues to fascinate Christians of every theological bent.

Fundamentalists extol the book as the inerrant blueprint for the end of history, with socialists/communists as the composite Antichrist; capitalists, the righteous; and the inevitable war between them, the prelude to the return of Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile, moderates and liberals generally avoid reading the book, unable to decipher logically the macabre images and fiery rhetoric contained in its 22 chapters.

Avoid extremes

The editor of the two most widely read modern translations of the Bible, the Rev. Bruce Metzger, urges avoiding both extremes.

Instead, he encourages Christians to read the book with reverence and "disciplined imagination."

Professor emeritus at Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary, Dr. Metzger was general editor of both the 1946 Revised Standard and the 1990 New Revised Standard versions of the Bible.

Bruce Metzger
... expert on the Bible

"[When dealing with Revelation], I have three presuppositions," he said.

The first of these, Dr. Metzger said, is that he believes the writer, John, when he wrote, "I saw" and "I heard."

John, a missionary to the ancient Roman province of Asia Minor [a much smaller region than that called Asia Minor today], wrote Revelation during his exile on the barren island of Patmos, located off the coast of what is now Turkey.

During the reign of Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96), John and other Christians, judged enemies of the throne, were sentenced to exile at hard labor.

"I think he had these visions and experiences," said Dr. Metzger. "I believe they were given to him from God."

Symbolic imagery

Second, Dr. Metzger said, one must understand John's visions as symbolic, based largely on Old Testament imagery.

Those symbols and their messages continue to be relevant to Christians even in modern times, he said.

For example, he said John's fantastic description of Christ in the first chapter of Revelation can be traced to earlier, biblical images of the Messiah:

"His head and his hair were as white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force" (Revelation 1:13-16, NRSV).

"It doesn't mean what it says, it means what it means," said Dr. Metzger with a professorial wave of his hands. "I don't think when you and I are in heaven we'll see Jesus walking around with a sword dangling from his mouth."

Rather, Dr. Metzger said, all John's images are rooted in Old Testament and early church symbolism.

White hair symbolizes advanced age, which ancient Jews traditionally revered as implying great wisdom, he said, while flaming eyes symbolize Christ's power to "see beyond and behind the chicanery we erect to hide from his gaze."

Christ is one with God

In the Old Testament Book of Ezekiel, chapter 43, the voice of God was first described as sounding "like many waters." For Christ's voice to be described the same way, said Dr. Metzger, demonstrates John's Christology (belief that Jesus Christ is one with God).

The seven stars are the seven churches of Asia Minor, or the church universal in John's experience, Dr. Metzger said. The sword issuing from Christ's mouth represents the profound judgment and justice of God, he added.

Finally, Dr. Metzger cautioned that readers of Revelation must remember the historical context during which John wrote—a time of great persecution of Christians in the Roman empire.

"Free-wheeling" Revelation interpreters like Hal Lindsay (author of "The Late, Great Planet Earth"), have attributed the symbolic "666"— the mark of the evil, worldly beast—to everything from computers to a former U.S. president, Dr. Metzger said.

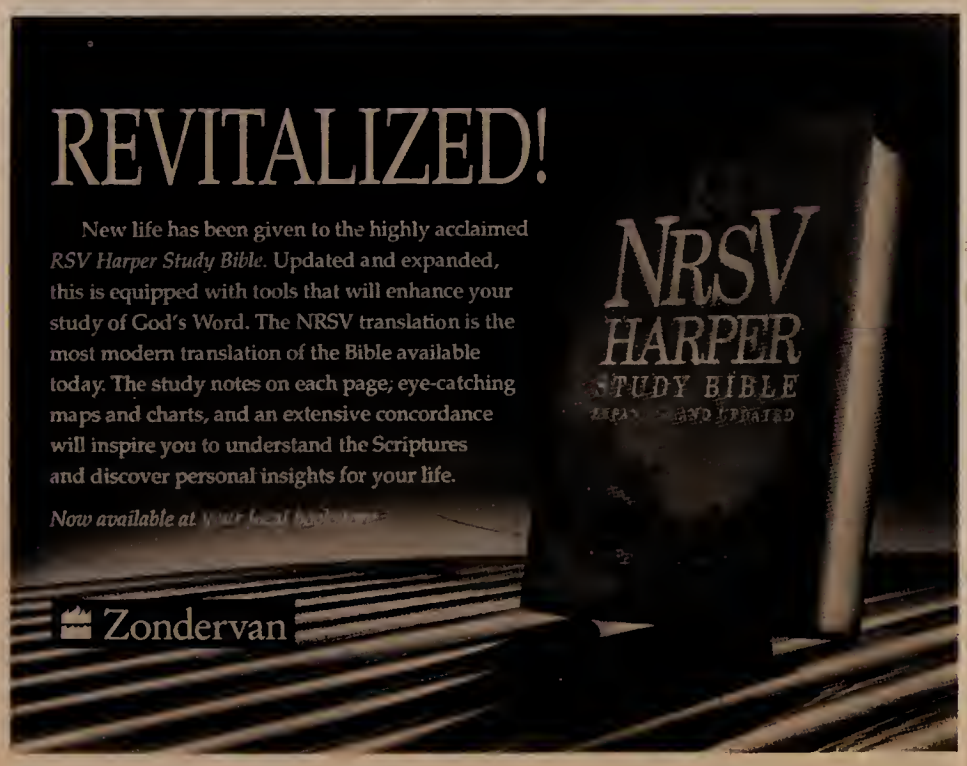
However, John's cryptic number (some ancient texts read "616") is most likely a coded reference to the emperor Nero—some ancient texts call him "Neron"—Kaisar (A.D. 37-68), known as a ruthless persecutor of Christians.

Only Nero fits

By applying numerical value to the Greek letters "Nero Kaisar," the total 666 is derived ("Neron Kaisar" equals 616), Dr. Metzger said, the only combination of letters in a proper name that fits the equation.

The apostle used numbers to protect himself from charges of treason if Roman soldiers read his journals.

Dr. Metzger spoke on Revelation during the recent annual meeting of the General Board of Discipleship.



New England conferences nix merger

United Methodist News Service

PORTSMOUTH, N.H.—Clergy and lay members of the Maine, New Hampshire and Southern New England Annual Conferences voted down a plan for merger Oct. 26.

Meeting jointly for the first time, members took the action after only 15 minutes' debate. On written ballots, tallied separately, each conference defeated the proposal by a margin of more than 2-1.

Maine conference members voted down the proposal 190-48; New Hampshire, 100-48; and Southern New England, 247-124. Total tally was 537 against, 220 for.

The merger proposal came from the Boston Area Committee on Episcopacy, which said it was designed to increase missional episcopal leadership in the area by allowing the bishop to deal with one set of structures and free up time and energy for mission and program.

Bishop of the Boston Area is F. Herbert Skeete.

Quick, push the 'delete' button!

Writer's ready to abandon whole gaggle of useless words, phrases

By A. JAMES RUDIN
Religious News Service

Commentary

The ability to push the "delete" button on a word processor gives one a sense of great potency. Unwanted words and phrases instantly disappear and are never seen again.

Intoxicated with such power, I have compiled a list of some common words or phrases that need to be deleted from current usage.

Heading the list are words we've come to think of as gender-exclusive: "mankind," "brotherhood" and "fellowship." Once these words were quite acceptable and even conveyed enormous positive meanings, but no more.

Others come to mind

Other words that should cause fingers to pounce on the magic button are the tepid "I hear where you are coming from" and its sentimental cousins, "share" and "concern."

Let's also get rid of "holocaust"—unless the first letter is capitalized, and "new religious movements" as a substitute for "cults."

Starting from the top, I wince each time I see or hear the masculine references. Especially upsetting is their use by men in sermons, speeches and public prayers.

People usually justify continued use of these words, despite their serious offense to women, by invoking something called "tradition" or by demurring "Of course I intended no harm," or "I feel that those words address women as well as men."

No defense

But neither defense is convincing after years of intensive gender consciousness raising within our churches and synagogues.

Another phrase that should be permanently retired is "I hear where you are coming from."

This tired expression is a poor substitute for an honest response, a patronizing reply whose real meaning is: "I may hear your words, but I don't like what you're saying; your position is dumb. Why can't you simply see that my views are correct and will ultimately prevail?"

Two more words that should be immediately erased are "concern" and "share." These tepid words are barriers to discussing real problems or issues.

We can't be angry or passionate about injustices, we can only voice a "concern."

Psychological jargon

As for "share," this is psychological jargon that probably originated in group therapy sessions where people were permitted to "share" their feelings but seldom voice opinions. And in the consequence of constant "sharing" about deeply painful issues, including death, divorce, despondency and disease, we somehow think it's weak to become angry, bitter, crotchety, depressed, edgy, furious, grimfaced, haunted, irritated or jealous.

The word "holocaust" spelled with a small "h" should be deleted from all public discourse. This terrifying word is often used to describe any destruction done to humans, animals or nature. People who use it this way make no allowance for either the kind or amount of destruction. If everything from forest fires to shootings in a Killeen, Texas, cafeteria is labeled "holocausts," then nothing is truly a "holocaust."

The word should be spelled with a capital "H," have no plural ending, and be used exclusively to describe the systematic murder of 6 million Jews carried out between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazis and their collaborators.

Finally, apologists of cults tempt us to employ an euphemism when describing these destructive groups—the neutral term "new religious movements." This is about as intellectually honest as describing the Ku Klux Klan as "a fraternal organization" or neo-Nazi thugs as "paramilitary groups whose members shave their heads."

Using "new religious movements" is an attempt by some people, usually academics, to avoid confronting the ugly side of cultic behavior. The phrase should be conscientiously deleted and replaced by a catalog of harmful practices indulged in by cults.

Brothers and sisters, start your word processors, and let the deletions begin.

PHOTO BY JAN LICHTENWALTER

Florida church boasts 'twin-terest'

TITUSVILLE, Fla.—You can't say that Sunday school at First United Methodist Church of Titusville isn't "twin-teresting." The preschool class boasts three sets of identical twin sisters: from bottom, Kasey and Katie Pirlo, Alison and Adrian Erlenbach and Sarah and Chelsea Bundy with their mother, Chris, a preschool teacher. While taking attendance can prove challenging to the teachers, a church spokeswoman said the twins' other 10 classmates don't seem fazed about seeing double—three times over.

TV review

'Catch the Spirit' spotlights unrest in Zaire

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

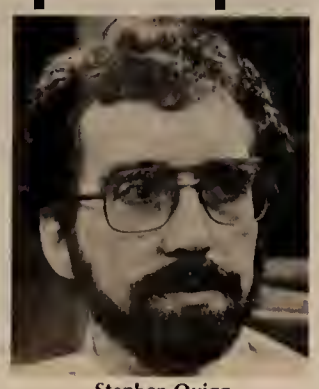
The edition of "Catch the Spirit" for the week of Nov. 10 sets new standards for religious broadcasters in the treatment of the church and politics.

The media have devoted hours to change in Eastern Europe but paid scant attention to those who are rising up against dictatorship in Africa.

"Catch the Spirit" takes us to Zaire, where United Methodist leaders are risking their lives by speaking out against the government of Mobuto Sese Seko, one of the most repressive and corrupt regimes on the continent.

We meet clergy who have not been on the evening news but who certainly resist a 26-year-old reign of terror.

Next we get a sober look at church politics in The United Methodist Church, with reports from the Little Rock Annual Conference and the New York Annual Conference on the role of caucuses in debating issues before the church and selecting delegates to General Conference.



Stephen Quigg
. . . pilot-missionary

Kibana Kiboko
. . . pastor in Zaire

Official publications of most denominations would just as soon pretend that all is sweetness and light within their fold, yet "Catch the Spirit" has the courage to explore the cumbersomeness of our elections, the pain of women and ethnic minorities who once were excluded from decision-making in the church, the way in which caucuses swap votes, the current anguish of some white male clergy who are not part of any caucus.

A hopeful note is struck, though, by the Rev. Kathleen LaCamera's interview with the Rev. Kathleen Richardson, the first woman elected president of the Methodist Church in England.

Elevated through intense politicking, Ms. Richardson is held up as evidence that God may work through the most cumbersome ecclesiastical process.

Finally, we are introduced to the Montana Logging and Ballet Company, an acclaimed musical group that specializes in political satire.

Its four members met at United Methodist-related Rocky Mountain College. One is a UM pastor in Montana, while another is a graduate of United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver whose wife is a member of the church's General Council on Ministries.

It would have been good to have heard more of the group, but we at least get a fresh perspective on the possibilities for constructive use of political humor.

"We are about hope," they say. "The humor is a part of the hope."

Mr. Goodhue, of Island Park, N.Y., is a frequent media reviewer for the Reporter.

'Family' history reveals much of our lives in faith

By WARNER A. HUTCHINSON
Religious News Service

Commentary

Women are often better caretakers of the past than are men.

The other day I sat in a small circle in a church parlor. New members were introducing themselves to each other.

One started by recounting some family history, so others started doing the same. Then one younger man said he didn't know all that much about his family's story.

The woman next to me asked him if he had asked his grandmother about the family. This woman went on to explain that professionally she is a geneticist.

She guides research on rare diseases at the local medical school. Getting family histories right is vital to her work. She has learned that the first person to talk to for the best information about a particular family is the oldest living woman in that family.

Not long ago family history was important mostly to those proud or insecure few who wanted to prove their present worth by their descent from some presumably illustrious ancestor.

Most people believed what was really important was what you did with your own life, not who your forbears were. And that's still how most people feel.

But we now understand more clearly that what we are genetically is partly rooted in our family. Understanding as much as we can about our own family's story helps us better place ourselves in our times.

The same is true for those of us who trace our religious heritage to one of the great, historic religions of the world. Our scriptures are based on stories passed down through the generations. They give us our spiritual genetic codes.

Mr. Hutchinson, former general secretary of the American Bible Society, now does writing and consulting work in Coral Gables, Fla.

Film review

'The Super' teaches lessons about redemption

By HILEY H. WARD

Joe Pesci, snarling and talking miles a minute, can be one of the most loveable villains in the movies, as he was as Tommy DeVito, the small-town hoodlum, in last year's "Goodfellas."

Now here he is in a relentlessly obnoxious role as a modern Scrooge in "The Super." The title in this fast-paced comedy refers to him as the superintendent or "landlord" of a slum building.

This is one of those many "redemption" movies that have been coming out this year, except that as a comedy this one has a soft, rather than tragic, edge.

Despite being a comedy, "The Super" carries serious messages besides that of the possibility of redemption of a miserable, lost human being, Louie Kritski (Mr. Pesci).

It speaks of the evils of prejudice and poverty and oppression. The very subject—slum landlords—suggests all of those.

The movie underscores the Golden Rule. Little Louie Kritski probably had never heard of such a dictum: "Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you," but he gets the message anyway—from a judge.

Louie's slum building, given to him as birthday present from his father, slum landlord king, Big Lou Kritski (Vincent Gardenia), is so bad that once little Louie is haled into court on a series of housing violations, the judge sentences him to live in his own building for 120 days.

The roof leaks, the rats growl, the toilet erupts and there is no heat or light. The floors are splinters, the walls so decayed that a tennis ball gets stuck in one.

"Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you." Little Louie is teachable.

The movie also underscores the utter need of humans for the association of others. Call it an exercise in the hell of loneliness or existential despair.

Louie Kritski is stuck in the shambles of an apartment on the top floor with nothing working as he listens to parties in the building. He is an outcast, not only ethnically—the building is black and Hispanic—but socially and spiritually. Humans need others, and therein begins little Louie's road to redemption.

He begins to change despite the fact that his father warns him if he so much as has anything fixed in the building, little Louie will be disinherited.

But forces are at work on Louie, including a boy, Tito, who follows him around as a kind of voice of conscience.

Louie tries his best to fit in, but he sometimes gets conned out of his money, as in a card game and outdoor basketball. Those who fleece him turn around and pay him his rent.

He thinks he's good at basketball, and in a three-on-three game, he makes most of the baskets. After he bets on a game, he, of course, is grossly outmatched. The players are in cahoots and take his money.

As the movie clips along, it takes some predictable turns. In its wake this modern Scrooge movie has some things to say.

Dr. Ward, of Philadelphia, frequently reviews films for the Reporter.

History of Hymns

1859 hymn pays tribute to Christ's healing powers

The great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer,
Oh! hear the voice of Jesus.
Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue;
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, blessed Jesus.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Six times the word physician appears in the New Testament, but never in reference to Jesus.

However, for one who brought the dead back to life, healed the sick, cured leprosy, made the blind to see, and drove out evil spirits, the name is most appropriate.

Christ was no ordinary physician, but a Great Physician with extraordinary powers to heal, restore, make whole, and "speak the drooping heart to cheer."

William Hunter wrote the hymn in 1859 and published it that year in a hymnal he compiled.

The refrain text of four lines he borrowed, with slight alterations, from the final stanza of a hymn that Richard Kempenfelt had written in 1777.

Sweetest sound in seraph's song,
Sweetest note on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung, Jesus,
Jesus, flow along.

Mr. Kempenfelt, a devout Christian and an admirer of George Whitefield and the Wesleys, was an admiral in the British Royal Navy. He was drowned when his ship sank in the harbor at Portsmouth in 1782.

Only this fragment remains of the more than a dozen hymns he wrote.

A native of Ireland, William Hunter came to the United States with his parents at age 6.

He attended Madison College, was ordained to the Methodist ministry and was admitted to the Pittsburgh Conference.

After serving several churches, he taught Hebrew and biblical literature at Allegheny College.

The author of more than 125 hymns, Mr. Hunter compiled three collections of hymns. He was appointed to the committee to revise the 1878 "Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Come, Sinners, to the Gospel Feast"

Dear Deborah

I'm hurt that my pastor refused my ad for babysitting

Dear Deborah:

I am a young mother with two small children.

Recently my husband left me, and I am trying to make a go of it alone. I thought I could help support my children by babysitting others in my home.

I went to my pastor and asked if anyone was looking for a sitter and could I put an ad in the church newsletter? I was brushed off and refused.

I am upset. Why would a pastor refuse to help me?

Wouldn't you think the church would want to help someone help themselves?

Deanne

Dear Deanne:

Yes, I am sure the church wants to help people help themselves. However, the difficulty often comes in deciding how to do that.

I was brushed off and refused. Why would a pastor refuse to help me?

You don't tell me any more about yourself or your situation, so I do not know if there are some personal reasons why the pastor would not put in an ad.

Even if the pastor has no reservations about you, if he or she accepted your ad it would seem to be an endorsement.

What about others in the church who also do babysitting? Will they be hurt or demand endorsement, too?

I suggest that you go back to the pastor and ask for an explanation of the reality in that congregation.

You might also ask for other ideas and suggestions about how to care for your children. I imagine this is a stressful time for you, and you are to be commended for trying to keep your family together.

I hope in all of this change and turmoil in your life you are continuing to pray and trust in God and find strength and courage to face your challenges day by day.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Stewardship

If you would receive life
then give yourself away:
some every day
in any way
to anyone
who needs you.
You'll learn the paradox of
life—
that one who gives of self
to others with humility
and undemandingly
does not lose life
but keeps it.
—POLLYANNA SEDZIOL

Poem

NOW AND FOREVER

All things begin;
Yet there is no beginning,
For each continues
What was there before
Of life or matter
In another form,
The seamless circle an unending orb
Where birth and growth and death—
Where dawn and noon and darkness—
Turn and return
Like fog to water to ice to fog again—
Where Word becomes flesh
And flesh becomes the Word,
And essence remains the same,
Now and forever. Amen.
—EDITH E. CUTTING

RETIRED MINISTERS HOMES

527 North Boulevard

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720

Angus Carruth, Director

Resident and Board Member Speak at Home Church

Mrs. Estelle D. Dameron, speaking to the congregation of First United Methodist Church in Pineville on Retired Ministers Homes Sunday.

Mrs. Estelle D. Dameron and Mr. Joe Crouch were speakers on Retired Ministers Homes Sunday, September 15, at First United Methodist Church in Pineville. Rev. Jimmie D. Pyles is pastor.

Estelle has resided in the home at 112 Redd Drive for 31 years, ten years with her husband prior to his death. She has been very active in the work of United Methodist Women, Christian education, and other phases of the total church program.

Joe has been an active and effective member of the Retired Ministers Homes Board. He has also taken a personal interest in caring for the maintenance of the home in Pineville.

It is most gratifying that these two persons, who have been and are vitally interested in the Retired Ministers Homes Ministry, represented this cause by speaking on its behalf in their local church.

The Retired Ministers Homes Board, Inc. is a corporation chartered in accordance with the laws of the State of Louisiana. It is administered by a Board of Directors, fifteen in number, composed of lay persons and clergy. The elected directors are nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations, and are elected by the Annual Conference.

Anyone, lay person or clergy, who has a special interest in this particular ministry and would like to be considered for nomination as a Board member is asked to contact Angus Carruth, Director, at 504/346-1646.

A word of appreciation . . .

.....to the individuals and churches making contributions on Retired Ministers Homes Sunday. Those churches which have not yet participated this year in support of this program are encouraged to do so.

.....to the ministers and churches that have invited the director to preach and present the work of the Retired Ministers Homes Board. He will welcome additional invitations.

The home pictured above is located at 800 Mound Street in Jonesville, Louisiana. It came as a donation to the Retired Ministers Homes in August, 1986 from Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Pierce of Alabama. As yet, no Methodist minister has requested this home for occupancy. A sizeable amount of money has been spent for repairs and maintenance and the house is presently in good condition.

Fortunately, we have this residence leased through December of this year with the option of renewal. However, if there is a retired Louisiana Methodist minister who is interested in considering this home as a residence, this interest should be conveyed to the Director.

The duplex pictured below is located at 1102 South Farmerville in Ruston, Louisiana. It was occupied as a single family dwelling by Mrs. Dorothy J. Lankford until her death.

Extensive remodeling and repair work is now being done. Upon completion it will be available as two units, one containing 795 square feet of living area and the other with 1120 square feet. The smaller unit will be available shortly. Any interested, eligible person should contact the Director for further information.

IN HONOR OF:	GIVEN BY:
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Crouch	Mrs. Estelle Dameron
Mrs. Estelle Dameron	Maurice J. Davis
Mrs. Doris Branton	Jane Martin
Mrs. Janelle McCammon	Jane Martin
Mrs. Hallie Haug	Jane Martin
Rev. & Mrs. James Ailor	Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Thomas
Rev. & Mrs. George McVay	Dr. & Mrs. Charles H. Garrett
Rev. Jim Ailor	Kathryn Grigsby
Rev. & Mrs. Larry Miller	Milton Vallery
Dr. Thomas R. Dunbar	Frances G. Martin
Dr. & Mrs. Dana Dawson	Mr. & Mrs. Victor Bussie
Rev. William E. Nolan	Mr. & Mrs. Ennis M. Midyett
Rev. Aubrey Smith	J. Edward Reynolds
Newman United Methodist Church	L. M. Whetstone
Bowen United Methodist Church	L. M. Whetstone
Rev. Angus Lee Carruth	Mr. & Mrs. Rich Adams
Rev. Alan Einsel	Mr. & Mrs. Rich Adams
Rev. Wishy Nolan	Mr. & Mrs. Rich Adams
Rev. Jerome Cain	Mr. & Mrs. Rich Adams
Rev. John Johns	Mr. & Mrs. Rich Adams

IN MEMORY OF:	GIVEN BY:
Robert Earl McInnis	Clarice H. McInnis
Rev. Fred Flurry	Mrs. Dell B. Davis
Floyd B. James	Renna J. Burkhalter
Leroy Barbier	C. L. Barbier
Rev. Otis Spinks	Mrs. H. H. Hanks
Charles Dorris	Dr. & Mrs. D. L. McGuire
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Nell S. Kimball	Marion W. Kimball
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M. G. Dickey	Mrs. Milton G. Dickey
Mrs. S. W. Hemphill	Merrye Lynn Brennan
Joe Lawton Jones, Sr.	Mr. & Mrs. Valmond D. Wallace
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Don B. Edgar	Mrs. Mary S. Edgar
Rev. B. P. (Daddy Paul) Durbin	Chaplain & Mrs. Paul Durbin
Martha Curtis Kennedy	Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Kennedy
R. W. Wooldridge	Mrs. C. Prentice Gray, Jr.
J. W. Perry	Mrs. C. Prentice Gray, Jr.
J. Kelly Ferris	Elizabeth M. Ferris
Dr. Victor B. "Bill" Scott	Mr. & Mrs. Sam D. Skinner
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William J. Gussman	Mrs. Grace Gussman
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Tom & Lisa Smith	Anonymous
Brian LeGendre	Clay LeGendre
Rev. Lewis E. Milem	Hornbeck United Methodist Church
Rev. & Mrs. John Newton	Mrs. Bridjette Newton Perry
Rev. Benjamin Smith	L. M. Whetstone

Mrs. Estelle D. Dameron, resident of the home at 112 Redd Drive, and Mr. Joe Crouch, Board member.

SEND YOUR GIFTS TO:

Retired Ministers Homes Board, Inc.
527 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802-5720

This program is an approved Missionary Advance Special of the Louisiana Annual Conference.

Lewis Love, Chairman	318-255-5601
Earle Cefalu, Jr., Secretary	504-748-7118
Mike John, Jr., Treasurer	318-323-2014
Angus Carruth, Director	504-346-1646
Raymond Crofoot, Superintendent of Properties	318-251-2236

RMHB

Housing Louisiana Retired Ministers

Notice of Board Meeting

The Retired Ministers Homes Board is scheduled to meet in Baton Rouge at the Methodist Building, 527 North Boulevard, Friday, January 17, 1992. The meeting will be held in the Conference Room on the third floor beginning at 11:00 a.m.

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

B NUMBER 25 | Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 | NOVEMBER 15, 1991

Let Our Beliefs Become Witness!

William B. Oden

Many of us have wondered how the Christians in Germany allowed Hitler to do what he did. Why didn't they take action? Franklin H. Littell wrote these words in THE GERMAN PHOENIX as he reflected on why the church was so passive in the early days of Nazism: "They persisted in verbalizing ideals that were not really commitments and resolving high intentions which were not made matters of witness."

As United Methodists, we have a code of Social Principles upon which we stand. Our church has a word, and it is clear — though we may not like to hear it: RACISM PLAGUES AND CRIPPLES! It is antithetical to the Gospel itself! It is a sin because it affirms dominance of one race over another and denies the equal worth of all persons! "There is no longer Jew or Greek . . .; for all of you are one in Christ." (Gal. 3:28).

Evil takes many faces — some so ugly that decent caring persons are repulsed, and some subtly mirroring our own fears, frustrations, and unspoken prejudices. Both faces of evil have ravaged Louisiana the last few weeks.

Our election is Saturday. Raw racism has surfaced in ugly faces and shapes. Heated rhetoric, endorsements, charges and counter charges are part of every campaign, hut Louisiana is experiencing some unique (and hopefully unrepeatahle) political ingredients that are polarizing our people and huilding walls that could divide us for years to come.

Suhtle racism has found its way into our coffee hreaks and office talk. For many of us, the choices are not to our liking. Two-thirds of the voters said "no" in the primary election to each of the candidates now running for governor. The issue is how to make a responsihle witness in an ambiguous political process.

As I have tried to sort out all the issues and amhiguities, the one overwhelming reality that will not go away is that racism in all its evil and divisive forms and faces is the single most present force in this campaign.

There is a lot of pain in our nation today, pain which is very real in Louisiana. But this pain must not paralyze us. If we in the Church truly believe what the Bible teaches, then we cannot mimic the German Christians of fifty years ago.

William B. Oden

United Methodist Student Sunday: Dec. 1

Since the founding of the (ill-fated) Cokesbury College at the historic "Christmas Conference" in 1774, Methodists have been vitally interested in higher education. The celebration of United Methodist Student Day, December 1st, is a continuation of that interest.

Churches throughout Louisiana plan to put the spotlight on their college students with a variety of activities. Many will feature these young adults in their worship service; some will have special lunches for them; others will choose to recognize them in other ways.

A special focus of this Sunday will be the collection of the United Methodist Student Day offering. The fund, which has its roots in the Sunday School Children's Fund established by the 1866 General Conference, was begun to aid "meritorious Sunday School scholars of either sex." Today these monies, administered by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, provide approximately $2 million in loans and $2 million in scholarships to 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

Resources available to churches interested in celebrating this event include a video, "The Gift of Learning," available from UMCom for $15 and a booklet, "College Bound: Featuring Loan and Scholarship Information for Undergraduate and Graduate Students — 1989-92," available from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Please don't forget nor neglect this important way to let the students in your congregation know how important they are to you and the church.

Congress on Evangelism set for January

Many well-known evangelists will participate in the upcoming Congress on Evangelism sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship's Council on Evangelism.

Maxie Dunnam, Joe Harding, Marjorie Kimbrough, Nell and Ralph Mohney, Seth Asare, Bill Hinson and Bishop Richard Looney will give ideas on church growth, visitation, drug abuse, exciting preaching styles, youth ministry, attracting baby boomers and other popular topics at the meeting which will be held in Orlando, Florida, Jan. 13-16.

The cost is $100 per person or $150 per married couple for the three-day event. Discount accommodations of $75 per night at the Orlando Hyatt are also provided. Interested persons should contact The Section on Evangelism; P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tn 37202-9790; 615/340-7000.

Plans for the Louisiana Conference Center on Course

The Site-Planning Committee as well as the Long-Range-Planning Committee met at Alexandria's First United Methodist Church November 2nd to discuss proposed facilities for the new Conference Center. Items such as road design, parking areas, the lake and other important components of the project were on the agenda.

Participants pictured above are Dr. Harvey Williamson, Project Coordinator; Mrs. Vera Packer, secretary of the Board of Trustees; Mrs. Carolyn Dove, chairperson of the Program Committee; Dr. Tom Matheny, chairperson of the Board of Trustees; Mr. Tommy Dunbar, Long-Range Planning Committee member; and the Rev. Larry Norman, chairperson of the Long-Range Planning Committee.

National Bible Week

The 51st interfaith celebration of National Bible Week will take place from November 24 to December 1. National Bible Week is sponsored by the Laymen's National Association, a nonprofit organization of business and professional people. Their purpose is to encourage the reading of the Bible by all Americans.

President and Mrs. George Bush are the honorary national chairpersons of this event. United Methodist Men, as well as many other religious and civic organizations, jointly sponsor the annual program.

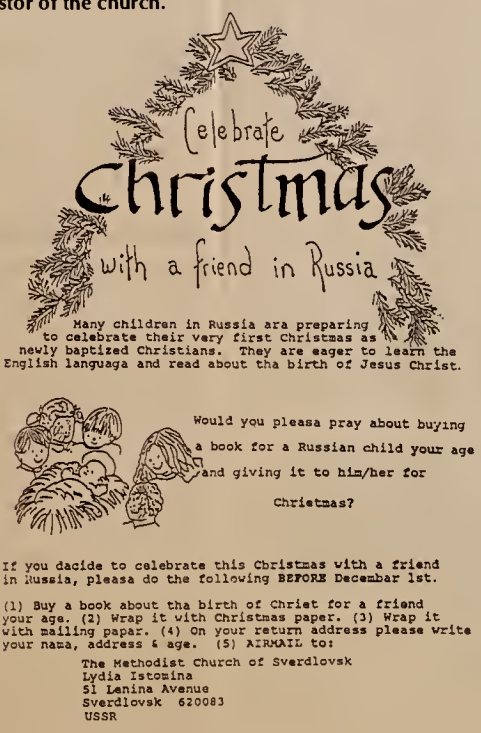
Around the Conference

The Junior High class of Many's First United Methodist Church constructed and erected two birdfeeders during the Vacation Bible School's July session. Pictured from the left are Keith Kratz; Jeremy Ferguson; Kenneth Ammons, instructor; Trey Harris; Lane Isgitt and Drew Nolen. On top of the ladder are Claire Gates and Sarah Kratz.

Pictured from left are Woody Jacocks, Katherine Pritchard and Melissa Barber who received Bibles on Promotion Sunday at the Gonzales United Methodist Church. Behind them is the Rev. Ken Jacocks, pastor of the church.

Nolley United Methodist Youth held a planning retreat in September. United Methodist Youth Officers for 1991-1992 are: Front row (l. to r.) JoAnna Bradford, president; Celeste Buckhalter, secretary. Second row: Jay Sanders, Allison Kendrick, Rebecca Cox, phone committee; Lori Bridges, president of the South Central Jurisdictional Conference Youth. Third row: Thomas Wright, secretary; Billy Hall, phone committee; and Will Bridges, vice-president.

The Vacation Bible School Class of Many's First United Methodist Church planted a dogwood tree in the church courtyard during the week of July 22-26. Pictured in the front from the left are Ian Everett, Aaron Isgitt, Davy Ammons, Lindsey Seegers, Jennifer Brock, Melissa Graves and Jessica Lafitte. Shown in the back are Vicky Isgitt, teacher; Jennifer Ferguson; Lisamarie Lahneman; Max Tannehill and Renee Nolan. The Rev. Larry D. Norman is Many's pastor.



Celebrate Christmas with a friend in Russia

Many children in Russia are preparing to celebrate their very first Christmas as newly baptized Christians. They are eager to learn the English language and read about the birth of Jesus Christ.

Would you please pray about buying a book for a Russian child your age and giving it to him/her for Christmas?

If you decide to celebrate this Christmas with a friend in Russia, please do the following BEFORE December 1st.

(1) Buy a book about the birth of Christ for a friend your age. (2) Wrap it with Christmas paper. (3) Wrap it with mailing paper. (4) On your return address please write your name, address & age. (5) AIRMAIL to:

The Methodist Church of Sverdlovsk
Lydia Istomina
51 Lenina Avenue
Sverdlovsk 620083
USSR

A youth group from Ingleside United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, including Ellen Solkin, Joan Abbott, Katy Lawson, Megan Lapari, Jennifer Williams, Amy Cole, Debbie Soskin, Cathy Sloan, Mrs. Beverly Lawson, the Rev. Tim Lawson, Olin Blumstein, James Lawson, Ev Auster, Damon Sende and Mason Lagerot, attended United Methodist Youth Fellowship Day at Southern Methodist University, September 28th. More than 1500 youths from the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church met on SMU's campus for a day of recreational activities and educational seminars.

Editorial

Ads glamorizing alcohol-youth link: Lies

This one's for you, Dr. Antonia Novello—but we don't mean a beer!

As U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Novello recently put heat on alcoholic beverage producers to stop aiming TV and radio ads at teenagers (see related article in this issue).

Speaking at a news conference, Dr. Novello denounced beer and wine ads that contain music or language popular among youth or use images that appeal to young people such as sports heroes and beach parties.

Such ads encourage teens to believe that "all they have to do to fit in is learn to drink the right alcoholic beverage," she said.

She added: "The ads tell our youth that vacationing on an exotic island, playing at the beach, participating in major league sports . . . or skiing, surfing or mountain-climbing go band in hand with alcohol."

Dr. Novello rightly pointed out that such alluring images are at odds with reality. Sixty-nine percent of boating accidents and 41 percent of drowning accidents are alcohol related, she said.

An alcohol industry official's response to Dr. Novello was both predictable and misleading. Anheuser-Busch vice president Josepb Castellano said, "Advertising is not causing underage drinking."

We consider it blatantly dishonest for the beverage alcohol industry to deny that a relationship exists between its youth-dominated ads and the drinking habits of teenagers.

Certainly, drug and alcohol use among young people, or any group for that matter, is rooted in multiple factors, including peer pressure, adult role models, family history, economics, even, possibly, genetics.

What alcoholic beverage producers fail to acknowledge is that, at a minimum, ads which glamorize teenage drinking reinforce societal attitudes that say it's OK, or even desirable, for young people to drink.

Why else do companies like Anheuser-Busch spend lavishly on TV commercials showing young people as the primary consumers of their products? The answer, of course, is that they know such ads get results.

Our Lord called to account those who tempt others to violate God's will—as the heartache and suffering caused by alcohol use most certainly do. We should do likewise.

As Christians, we should join our voices to that of the U.S. Surgeon General and vigorously oppose beer and wine ads that glamorize drinking as an "in thing" for teens to do.

We should inform our U.S. congressional representatives of our opposition to such advertising and urge them to support House Resolution 1443 and Senate Bill 664. Both bills call for health warnings on ads and labels for alcoholic beverages similar to those required for cigarettes.

Also, we should monitor the TV and radio ads to which young people in our homes are exposed. Short of simply turning them off, we should use such ads as opportunities to lift up the contrast between the deceptive images on the screen and the God-forsaking realities they conceal.

Here I Stand

Is 'marketing' image doing us in?

By ROBERT R. FEJES

Has anyone noticed how much worship has come to resemble a commercial?

This past year I was unexpectedly given the opportunity to experience many different worship services. I saw a general pattern, but I couldn't quite figure out what was going on.

I was reading through some of my journals when I came upon an entry concerning a men's retreat I had attended.

Jesus is our product?!

A United Methodist bishop said that the church needed to realize that it was a business. He further said, "The church is in sales, my friends, and Jesus is our product."

I confess this concept appalled me. It did some 20 years ago and it does now.

The TV evangelists and the church growth movement have stressed the importance of marketing. They tell us that to be successful you have to know your audience.

I have observed that in sales, the customer is always right. This maxim now seems to play a very large role in the church.

Many churches now take surveys to find out what their congregations want, not only in programs, but also in worship. One church even did away with Lent because the people felt it was such a "downer."

Focus has moved from God

Just recently I have come to realize that there is a misdirection in the product being pushed. Not only has the focus of worship moved from God (Jesus) to the people, but also the product has shifted from God (Jesus) to the church itself.

The purpose of worship seems to have become convincing people what a friendly, family, place we are—yes, even for single-person families (can there be such a thing?).

Making us feel better

The idea seems to be that tbe church can make you feel better than anyone or anyplace else.

I wonder (imagine this in my best Andy Rooney voice): Is this a good thing?

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express their opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Robert R. Fejes of Paducah, Ky., is president of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts. This article is reprinted by permission from the fellowship's magazine, "News Notes."

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Letters to the Editor

Friendliness, not edicts, holds key to ending decline

The experience of Timothy J. Smith which he recounted in the Oct. 25 "Here I Stand" also happened to me and my wife not just once but several times—all in United Methodist cburches.

We were newly-arrived immigrants then and were looking for a new home church. Sunday after Sunday we visited different Methodist churches in the city where we used to live, and Sunday after Sunday we left each one of those churches very sad, puzzled and confused.

The words of Mr. Smitb—"They really don't want us to come back"— are the same words we silently uttered in our hearts each time we would leave a "friendly church" with a cold, cold heart.

We are losing members faster than we would like to admit and I believe that no legislation from the General Conference nor edict from the church hierarchy can substantially reverse the downward trend. The answer lies in the ordinary people in every "friendly church" who can honestly and faithfully translate this, our Methodist philosophy of "friendliness," through words and actions that come straight from the heart.

Serge Pena
Poway, California

'Minority' term must go

This comment is in regard to the Oct. 11 article headlines, "Racial/Ethnic Minority term preferred."

As a member of the United Methodist Churcb and of one of the groups mentioned in the article as "ethnic minority," I have serious problems accepting the decision to retain this negative terminology in identifying people of color in our country and especially within our church.

The term "minority" not only refers to groups or things showing less in number. The language and imagery projected by the term depicts the determination of the "majority" to see the personhood of those designated as "minority" to have less value.

The 1988 General Conference rightfully and justifiably brought to the surface this degrading label identifying people of color.

The fact that the task force which examined the issue decided to retain the term contradicts the General Conference's objective.

Gloria Reagon Price
St. Louis, Missouri

Pontius' Puddle

What others are saying

"I don't think we United Methodists have become 'compassion weary'—I tbink we haven't been given enough opportunities to share our joy."

—The Rev. Robert C. Smith, consultant, United Methodist Committee on Relief.

* * *

"I believe the church, when it is the church, is a counterculture in the world. I think that until the unity in the church comes to its fullness, this Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns will be a counterculture within the church."

—United Methodist Bishop William B. Grove (West Virginia Area) in his address as outgoing president of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

* * *

"Everywhere I go in Africa, there are Methodist missionaries at work where they have been for more than 100 years, making peace, giving people hope and dignity, building community. I see the same thing in South America and Asia. You people are the peacemakers of the world. But I never see you celebrating it. You ought to be telling the world what you are doing. But you just give your money and forget it. Why aren't you celebrating?"

—Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, American Jewish Committee, quoted in the California-Pacific conference edition of the Reporter

My Witness

Teens' encounter with Holy Spirit revived us

By DON LEWIS

I know of notbing more exciting in the church of Jesus Cbrist than to see the Holy Spirit moving among teenagers.

Tbis is exactly what is happening in our congregation.

God has been working in the hearts of our youth for some time, but tbis spiritual awakening became public on July 14, 1991.

Our district lay leader was preaching. When he gave the invitation to Cbristian discipleship, a young man, age 16, came to the chancel and asked to address the congregation.

'High on the Lord'

He said that he bad been, "high on the Lord" for some time, but had refused to obey the Lord. He promised to stand up for tbe Lord publicly from tbat day forward.

With unusual boldness, he said that our local cburch was "dead," and called on the congregation to "get the Holy Spirit back into our church." At the same time a young lady, also age 16, responded, saying that she too, wanted to recommit her life to Cbrist.

From that day, the movement of the Holy Spirit among our young people has been electrifying. On my first Sunday back in the pulpit, these same two young people came to tell me of their commitments, and many otber youth joined them in the chancel, telling me of tbeir desire to commit their lives to Christ.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Don Lewis is pastor of A. Frank Smith United Methodist Church in Alto, Texas (Texas Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

I went in quietly

On the evening of July 28, after a joint worship service with a neighboring church, I heard a group of our youth in the sanctuary. I went in quietly and sat in the back, and was humbled and impressed by what I saw.

For more tban two hours, the youths sat on the floor discussing Bible verses, praying, and witnessing to their faitb in Jesus Christ, as well as learning to love and forgive each other. As a result, enemies have become friends, and cliques have been broken up by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Chancel filled for prayer

Now, many youth fill our chancel for prayer and renewal after each service. Most remarkable of all was a youth revival in August. A college senior preached, and a high school senior from another town served as worship leader and soloist.

Our youth group averages 15 in attendance, but more than 78 youths attended during the revival. Those attending were very aware of the presence of God, and each night the front of our sanctuary was filled with teenagers responding to God's call. Many were converted or restored to faith in Jesus Christ.

The last night of tbis meeting was wonderful. Thirty teenagers stood in front of the congregation, saying that "Jesus Christ was in their hearts, and tbat they were determined to live for Him."

Then, to my utter amazement, many adults stood to witness to their faith as well. I have never seen or experienced anything like this before.

I attribute this remarkable spiritual awakening to the grace and power of God, and to the love and dedication of our youth Sunday school teacher and youth sponsors.

This awakening is not merely "emotional." The first result has been that our youth are studying their Bibles and praying, which shows a depth to their experiences.

These same teenagers had no interest in the Bible, prayer, or religion a short time ago. They were bored with Sunday school and church. Now, 17 attend Sunday school regularly, and they sit at the front of the sanctuary, listening attentively to the sermons, and participating in worship. Their lives, conduct, and attitudes have been dramatically altered.

The Holy Spirit is beginning to work among our adults, and I pray we all will be as open to God as our young people! This has been Aldersgate for us, and our hearts have been strangely warmed!

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us."

Book *Chapter* *Verse*

_____ ___ : _____

(Last week's answer: Mark 9:23,24)

Readings for week of Nov. 18

Monday: Psalms 145:8-9
Tuesday: Psalms 145:10-13
Wednesday: Daniel 7:9-10
Thursday: Daniel 7:11-14
Friday: Mark 13:24-27
Saturday: Mark 13:28-32
Sunday: Hebrews 10:11-18

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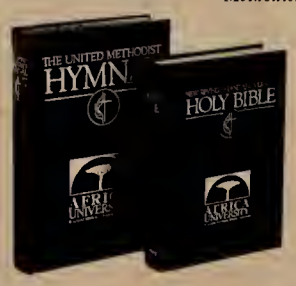

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Faith watch

ONENESS IN CHRIST: A United Methodist bishop has asked that the World Council of Churches seek "a re-emerging vision as the servant of the churches in their quest for oneness." Bishop **Melvin G. Talbert** (San Francisco Area) recently told his colleagues on the council's Central Committee that he learned what "oneness in Christ" means in the small Methodist church in Louisiana where he grew up, the son of a sharecropper who had less than a year of formal schooling. The only restrictions on the oneness of the communion table there, said the bishop, were those which an individual placed on himself or herself. Churches, he said, should "bring to the arena of the WCC all the reasons we can identify for why we cannot come to the table together and then let those reasons become the agenda for our search for a greater understanding of our oneness in Christ."

BIGOTRY AT BALLOT BOX: As Louisiana voters prepare to vote Nov. 16 in a bitter gubernatorial contest, religious leaders are urging them to move beyond religion- and race-baiting and look seriously at the issues. United Methodist Bishop **William B. Oden**, president of the 22 member-Louisiana Interchurch Conference, said the group's executive committee "expressed regret that race and religion have been injected and exploited at the very time in Louisiana when there is a need for reconciliation and bridge-building."

TYPHOON HITS PHILIPPINES: United Methodists through **Advance No. 240235-2, Philippine Typhoons** are assisting victims of the latest disaster in the Philippines. Typhoon Thelma sent flood waters surging through towns and villages on Nov. 5 near the island of Leyte. News reports listed 2,230 people dead and 3,000 missing. This was considered the Philippines' highest flood toll in nearly a decade. United Methodist Bishop **Jose Gamboa Jr.** of Davao City has dispatched district superintendent **Myrna Villamuava** and Dr. **Leo Soriano**—a physician and United Methodist Board of Global Ministries person-in-mission—to the area. Grants of $3,000 for Bishop Gamboa's area and $10,000 for Northern Luzon under Bishop **Paul L.A. Granadosin** (Baguio City Area) were sent by the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

DEFUNDING RUPTURES TRUST: The president of the international Baptist seminary in Switzerland says the vote by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees to defund the seminary's operating budget is rupturing European trust of Southern Baptists and forcing the seminary to accelerate fund-raising efforts. **John David Hopper** said the trustees' unexpected action "dismayed" and "deeply saddened" him and outraged European Baptist leaders in 17 countries. Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees voted last month to cut the $365,000 the board had allocated for the 1992 operating budget of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and redirect the money to theological needs in Eastern Europe.

CALL THE 'GREEN' HOTLINE: A national "green network" designed to strengthen religious environment activity has been launched at the initiative of U.S. religious and political leaders. A toll-free number has been established to gather documentation about what congregations are doing to protect the environment. Local churches are asked to report on such activities as recycling, religious education, liturgy, land use programs, energy conservation and local advocacy by calling **1-800-435-9466.** Information collected by telephone and in a follow-up survey will be published in time for a Washington Summit on the Environment next May.

Compiled from news and staff reports

German bishop to head Soviet initiative

Humanitarian, spiritual outreach planned as response to people of Russia

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—An East German bishop with "eight years of schoolbook Russian" in his subconscious has been named by the United Methodist Council of Bishops to head a mission of humanitarian and spiritual outreach to people of Russia and the former Soviet republics.

Bishop Ruediger R. Minor of Dresden, East Germany, will head the mission which is a cooperative effort of United Methodism's European College of Bishops, the Council of Bishops and the church's General Board of Global Ministries.

Bishop Minor

Bishop Minor will begin coordinating humanitarian efforts and nurturing and developing local churches in the former Soviet Union in January 1992. He is president of the European College of Bishops.

Before his election to the episcopacy, Bishop Minor was a local pastor in East Germany, a seminary professor and later director of the United Methodist Theological Seminary in East Germany.

In an interview with the Reporter, Bishop Minor said East Germans felt the force of the Russian military during the years of Soviet occupation—in 1953, for example, when Soviet tanks overthrew an "outbreak of outrage" by workers who stood up against the government.

For 45 years, Russian troops were stationed in East Germany. Yet, he said, they were segregated from the East German population.

Then, last Christmas, churches in East Germany were allowed to give Christmas gifts to the Russian troops, and many did so, he said.

When church members visited the Soviet barracks, they saw how hard the conditions were for the Russians, he said.

"My personal relationships with the Russians have changed quite a lot since then," he said.

He discovered in the Russians a great openness of spirit and a great desire to be a part of an open European society, he said.

In talking to Christians from Russia and other former Soviet republics, he found that "our struggles were nothing compared to their struggles. Nothing."

Special relationship

"So I feel a special relationship to this nation out of a common history of much suffering—and where neither of the two sides is without guilt, where both sides could bear the promise of the future, acknowledging the guilt and the suffering and asking for forgiveness."

Bishop Minor said it is very important in setting up the new cooperative mission to listen to the Christians who are already there and who have been there in recent decades.

Dialogue with ecumenical partners is also important, he said. He predicts tensions with the Russian Orthodox Church, which, he said, is enjoying a "triumphalist mood" right now.

"But again, we need an open, responsible, sincere relationship with our ecumenical partners—not hiding our own identity but, in a caring way, trying to understand their position without sharing it or surrendering to it."

'Now is the time'

Bishop Minor said he feels that now is the time for the church to act in the former Soviet republics.

In accepting his special episcopal assignment, Bishop Minor told the Council of Bishops that he is digging deeply into his subconscious for "eight years of Russian in school. So I am learning to cry with my Russian sisters and brothers, 'Lord, have mercy,' and I am eager to witness with them, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God.' "

Funds created for Soviet work

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Bishop Ruediger R. Minor said a special fund has been set-up for mission work in Russia and Eastern Europe. One hundred percent of donations to the fund will go to mission work, he said.

Donations may be directed to **United Methodist Fund: Mission in Europe, Badenerstrasse 69, P. O. Box 469, CH-8026 Zurich, Switzerland.**

In addition, gifts may be directed to the Soviet Initiative, Advance No. **115101 RA,** through the General Board of Global Ministries World Division.

Bishops accuse Koreans of ignoring church agreement

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Bishop Jack M. Tuell (Los Angeles Area) told his colleagues on the United Methodist Council of Bishops last week that the Korean Methodist Church, by establishing districts within the United States, had ignored an earlier agreement with the United Methodist Church.

Those actions may jeopardize United Methodist ministry to Korean Americans, Bishop Tuell added.

Leaders of the two churches had agreed, the bishop said, that within the United States, United Methodists would be the primary carrier of mission to the Korean people and that this mission would be carried out in consultation with the Methodist Church of Korea.

On the other hand, he continued, in Korea the Korean church would have the primary responsibility.

"Now Bishop Jun-Tae Kwak (president of the Korean Council of Bishops) says the Korean General Conference has voted to have an annual conference that includes the United States."

The Korean annual conference in the United States is claiming not only the independent Korean churches but some 300 United Methodist Korean-American churches.

"It was as though the agreement didn't exist," Bishop Tuell said. "I'm deeply distressed about this."

Urging the United Methodist Council of Bishops to take a very firm stand, he said, "I think there is a lot at stake here. If we simply let this happen, the possibility of our ministry among United Methodist Korean people is extremely jeopardized."

Bishop C. Dale White (New York Area) agreed.

"The new (U.S.) districts of the Korean Methodist Church are potentially very divisive," said the New York bishop. "I think the Council of Bishops should protest this in the strongest possible terms."

Korean Methodist Bishop Kwak met last week with United Methodist bishops. He reportedly said that the Korean church action did not radically depart from the earlier agreement.

The Korean General Conference created an annual conference with mission districts in Europe, South America, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and the United States, Bishop Kwak said.

Following the talk by Bishop Kwak and discussions with him, the United Methodist Council of Bishops approved a resolution asking the president and secretary of the council to express "grave concern" to Bishop Kwak about the Korean General Conference actions in light of the agreement reached at a consultation between the two church bodies in February, 1991.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DIANE HUIE BALAY

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—The four women bishops of The United Methodist Church, pictured last week during the Council of Bishops' meeting, are, standing, from left, Judith Craig (Michigan Area), Sharon Brown Christopher (Minnesota Area), Susan Morrison (Philadelphia Area) and, seated, retired Bishop Leontine T. C. Kelly.

'Conversation' airs regional, global missions

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Sixty-some United Methodist leaders "began a conversation" Oct. 31-Nov. 1 on the church's structure, particularly as it relates the annual conference (regional) level to the church's global mission.

Participants spent the first day discussing the mission of the annual conferences, defined in the United Methodist Constitution as the "basic body of the church."

The second day saw the context broadened to emphasize the expanding global nature of United Methodism.

As the discussion progressed, it was clear that the leaders present were not disposed to focus now on configuration of the church's domestic and international program and administrative agencies. Looks of substantial dismay greeted any suggestion that it might be time to study restructure.

Conferences restructure

The consultation was triggered, said General Council on Ministries chief executive David Lundquist, by the fact that nearly one-third of the church's 72 annual conferences in the United States are studying their own structure and addressing what they consider to be deficiencies in those structures.

At the same time, he added, the implications of being a global denomination are being discussed in the Council of Bishops and other areas of the general church.

The idea was to get all the people who are talking about this together in one place.

Bishop Ben R. Oliphint (Houston Area) outlined proposals being developed within the Council of Bishops for possible submission to the church's policymaking 1992 General Conference. Under discussion is a revamped worldwide assembly and four regional bodies that would cut across national boundaries.

'Nationalism not effective'

Nationalism, said Bishop Oliphint, "is not an effective basis for planning mission or structure."

United Methodism outside the United States is asking for changes that reflect growing strength, he added.

Participants—annual conference leaders, bishops, general secretaries of boards and agencies and general-church elected directors—also agreed that the present structure of the church accomplishes some things very well but that too often "we don't tell the story" of the successes.

Mr. Lundquist said the consultation started a "conversation" that will continue across the denomination.

"It became clear that whatever the vision is, it has to be relevant in the local church.

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Sexual harassment, misconduct denounced by UMC's bishops

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—The United Methodist Council of Bishops adopted a resolution last week calling for education and training in the areas of sexual harassment and misconduct at all levels of the church, starting with the bishops themselves.

Calling sexual harassment a "sin," the resolution also stated that the Council of Bishops would ensure "that clear and effective sexual harassment policies and grievance procedures are established and implemented within each episcopal area."

In addition, the bishops resolved to lead the church in modeling an environment free of harassment. The environment modeled would be one of "welcome, respect and equality."

The bishops also voted to conduct a seminar for themselves on sexual harassment and clergy misconduct within the next four years.

The bishops' actions followed a report by their Pastoral Concerns Committee. The committee heard staff members from three agencies of the church say that the church pays a heavy price when a member is sexually harassed or is the victim of clergy misconduct.

Heavy price paid

A heavy price is also paid by the victim and by the family of the perpetrator, the bishops were told.

A survey last year by the church's General Council on Ministries documented that sexual harassment is a problem within the United Methodist Church and that it interferes with the church's moral mission.

Also resources have been developed to help annual conferences deal with sexual harassment issues. These issues can lead to legal and financial difficulties.

Lawsuits of this nature, said Craig Hoskins of the church's top financial agency, "invariably name the bishop, the district superintendent and the annual conference as well as the alleged perpetrator."

Litigation is both lengthy and expensive, he said.

Ministerial misconduct is particularly damaging to the church, said the Rev. Stephanie Anna Hixon of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

First there is the profound injury to the victim—physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually, she said.

Great family tragedy

In addition, there is great tragedy to the family of the perpetrator, she said.

Such conduct can devastate the congregation in which it occurs, she continued, through grief, polarization, loss of membership and loss of ministers.

Such conduct "erodes the fabric of sacred trust and chips away at the public perception of the church," she said.

A diversion of resources—time, energy and finances—to respond to the crisis situations can result from such conduct, Ms. Hixon said.

Stephanie Anna Hixon
'. . . tragedy for church'

The answer, she said, lies in education and training within the Council of Bishops, the jurisdictional colleges of bishops, and in all episcopal areas.

The Rev. Robert Kohler of the Division of Ordained Ministry declared, "Every annual conference needs to deal with this."

Many annual conferences are working on guidelines, he continued.

"About one-third of the annual conferences in the United States have people trained to conduct clergy sexual ethics seminars and training."

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

DECISION RESCINDED: Directors of the General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division have rescinded a recommendation made last spring to amend the United Methodist Social Principles on abortion. In April, the division approved a proposal to the church's 1992 policymaking General Conference to add that governmental laws and regulations "... should not intrude into private decisions concerning reproductive rights." Officials of the agency said "since April, several concerns about the wording have come to our attention. Therefore, we recommend rescinding this recommendation so that the Social Principles remain as voted by the General Conference in 1988."

AIDS TASK FORCE REPORTS: An interagency United Methodist task force on the AIDS crisis is recommending to the 1992 General Conference that the task force be continued four more years (1993-96). The recommendation was approved by the church's General Board of Global Ministries, which has responsibility for the committee through its Health and Welfare Ministries Department. At the task force's suggestion, a petition urging inclusion of HIV status as a handicapping condition for employment and anti-discrimination policies is being sent to General Conference. Another concern to be expressed to General Conference is that restrictions on funding to gay and lesbian groups within the church should not limit response to the AIDS epidemic.

COOPERATION IN MINISTRY: "Vitalizing Congregations, Transforming Communities," is the theme of the Third National Consultation on Cooperative Parish Ministry, Nov. 21-24, in Louisville, Ky. Dr. **Jocelyn Elders**, a United Methodist laywoman and pediatrician who heads the Arkansas Department of Health, will be the keynote speaker. The event is sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries National Division in cooperation with the national networks on Town and Country and Urban Ministries. Included in the meeting will be rural chaplaincy training funded through a Global Ministries grant of $18,000.

WOMEN'S DIVISION EXEC: **Anna Rhee**, program associate for the Washington-based United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, has been named executive secretary for public policy for the church's General Board of Global Ministries Women's Division, effective Dec. 6.

MEMORIAL FUND: The Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville has set up a memorial fund to support the **Walter Towner** Museum to honor the United Methodist historian, clergyman and scholar who died in Nashville Nov. 4 at age 97. In 1931 Dr. Towner became director of youth work for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. After the 1939 merger of three branches of Methodism, he headed a denominationwide department of General Church School Work and later served on the development staff of the church's Board of Education until he retired in 1965. At that time he joined the faculty of the Scarritt-Bennett Center's predecessor, Scarritt College, where he developed the evangelism education department. He retired from the faculty in 1976.

Compiled from news and staff reports

UMs praise, criticize call to curb alcohol ads

Surgeon General's stand affirmed but 'didn't go far enough,' according to agency official

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

See Page 2 Editorial

Have you listened closely to that catchy jingle you've heard your teenager singing? Were you shocked when you realized it was for a popular alcoholic product?

If so, you're among a growing number of United Methodists who think it's time to call a halt to such advertising being aimed at young people.

Last week's call for voluntary curbs on youth-directed alcohol advertising by U.S. Surgeon General Antonia Novello has elicited both praise and criticism from United Methodists active in campaigns against alcohol and drug abuse.

Bishop affirms effort

Bishop Felton E. May Jr. (Harrisburg, Pa., Area), is completing a two-year assignment as the leader of the Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence. One of his final leadership roles was to preside over a four-day Pan-Methodist Youth Convocation on the topics in Atlanta in September.

Of Dr. Novello's call, Bishop May said: "I affirm her statement and applaud her courage for pointing out facts that should be obvious to all Christians and United Methodists.

"The Pan-Methodist youth who recently met in Atlanta very clearly said there should be control of advertising alcoholic beverages and control of violence on television. I have for years decried the large amount of alcohol-related advertising in communities of people of color."

'She just fell short'

However, at least one United Methodist representative believes Dr. Novello's call doesn't go far enough because it doesn't advocate regulation of alcohol advertising.

Jeri Hamilton Scott, a staff member of the General Board of Church and Society located in Washington, represents United Methodists on the Coalition on Alcohol Advertising and Family Education.

Although coalition and Congress members are appreciative of the Surgeon General's effort, Ms. Scott said, they also believe "she just fell short" by failing to advocate legislation that would stop alcohol manufacturers from targeting young people in advertising their products.

"It's quite obvious that alcohol ads play to youth," said Ms. Scott. "The jingles are cute, and even I sing them. I'm sure the kids do, too.

"The number of deaths and automobile accidents [involving alcohol] speak loudly that young people ages 12 to 17 are getting alcoholic beverages from somewhere," she noted.

"Although there are no studies specifically on alcohol advertising, other studies have shown that glamorizing a product speaks to a person's subconcious."

The coalition on which Ms. Scott serves, which includes representatives of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Episcopal Church, is supporting congressional bills that would require alcohol advertising to carry strongly worded warning labels similar to those now on cigarettes.

Ms. Scott said those bills are House Resolution 1443 sponsored by U.S. Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II (D-Mass.) and Senate Bill 664, sponsored by U.S. Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.).

Neither bill, however, supports a ban on alcohol advertising. Such a ban was advocated by the 1988 General Conference, United Methodism's highest policymaking body.

Working towards an alcohol advertising ban was among duties assigned by the 1988 General Conference to the church's Standing Committee on Alcohol and Other Drugs. The committee, affiliated with the General Board of Church and Society, is scheduled to report on its work to the 1992 General Conference May 5-15 in Louisville, Ky.

What is UM stance on alcohol ads?

The United Methodist Church—historically an advocate of abstinence from intoxicants—has supported the elimination of alcohol advertising since 1988.

The 1988 Book of Resolutions—the collection of the church's positions on various social, economic and political issues—includes a 12-page resolution on "Drug and Alcohol Concerns."

A section on alcohol includes this statement:

"We favor laws to eliminate the advertising of alcoholic beverages. Working toward this end, we urge the Board of Church and Society and local churches to increase efforts to remove all advertising of alcoholic beverages from television (as was done with cigarette advertising). We urge special attention to curbing promotions on the use of alcoholic beverages on college campuses."

The same resolution also urges the Federal Trade Commission "to develop a health hazard warning statement concerning the use of alcohol as a beverage, and that it be affixed to all alcoholic beverages offered for sale."

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

PHOTO BY SUZANNE CALVIN

UM church takes stand on gambling

CENTRAL CITY, Colo.—The Rev. Robert Hunter, minister of St. James United Methodist Church, stands behind a banner—"Win or lose, St. James is here for you"—aimed at people who participate in gambling, which was recently made legal in the area. The UMC's Social Principles oppose gambling. But, Mr. Hunter said, St. James is taking seriously the Social Principles' call for Christians to "strive to minister" to people involved with gambling.

Bishop helps sink TV lottery

By TOM MORTON
Religious News Service

United Methodist Bishop Jack Tuell (California-Pacific Area) recently stopped at a grocery store in Southern California.

At the end of the checkout line—amid the magazines, candy and cigarettes —sat the epitome of impulse buying: the machine that spit out the tickets for the California Lottery.

Bishop Tuell witnessed a common scene. A woman dressed in shabby clothing laid down $100 for 100 lottery tickets.

'Drains the lifeblood'

"When you multiply that," he said, "what you really have is a system that drains the lifeblood out of thousands of poor people to make one person rich. To me there's something morally repugnant about that, and the state is supervising it all."

State-sponsored lotteries are bad enough, said Bishop Tuell. Even beyond ridiculous odds—one in 23 million for the California lottery's top prize—lotteries deceive the public into thinking it is getting sound financing for state programs, and they encourage individual financial irresponsibility and compulsive gambling, he said.

But even those problems struck Bishop Tuell as Mickey Mouse compared to Walt Disney Company's plans announced in May to launch a nationwide television lottery.

Disney planned TV lottery

Disney subsidiary Buena Vista Television planned to produce a half-hour show beginning next fall in cooperation with Lottery Innovations Company and more than 30 state lotteries.

Bishop Tuell drew upon his ministerial, legal and social activist skills to oppose prime-time gambling, and the protest he spearheaded sent the plan back to Fantasyland.

Although Disney discounted Bishop Tuell's role in its change of plans, it appears to be a David-and-Goliath success. His efforts earned him high visibility by way of a story in the November issue of Lear's magazine.

In the story about a proposed televised national lottery, Bishop Tuell recounted his message to Disney in a letter to chairman Michael Eisner:

'I couldn't believe my ears'

"I could hardly believe my ears, because the Disney Company has prided itself for so long on being a company devoted to family values and the strengthening of morality in our country."

Disney didn't respond to the bishop.

Undaunted, he wrote a column in his conference's weekly edition of the Reporter about Disney's plans.

He brought the issue before his fellow bishops at their annual meeting in May, and also persuaded a Los Angeles ecumenical group to write to Disney.

"I even called up a guy I don't agree with—the Rev. Don Wildmon—I told him about it," Bishop Tuell said.

On May 31, Buena Vista and Lottery Innovations Company announced they were discontinuing their agreement based on an internal decision that it might be incorrectly perceived that Disney was encouraging children to play lotteries.

Buena Vista Television spokeswoman Marian Effinger said the bishop's protest had nothing to do with the decision.

But Bishop Tuell takes credit anyway. "Apparently Disney thought it made some difference, because most of this (protest) came out of the church community. I have no question that Disney backed off (because of our protest)."

Puerto Rico UMs, missions board fuss about funds

United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—The United Methodist international missions agency has approved a proposal to back financially the desire of the denomination's Puerto Rico Annual Conference to become an independent body—but not without conflict.

A district superintendent from Puerto Rico asserted that actions taken by the mission board at its recent meeting contradicted earlier verbal agreements between board officials and Puerto Rican leaders.

The Rev. Victor Bonilla of San Juan said that decisions on property matters and the future relationship of Puerto Rican churches to the General Board of Global Ministries were contrary to those discussed in earlier meetings.

"For 90 years the mother (United Methodist) church has dealt with Puerto Rico as a totally dependent entity," he said. "Now the board seems to suggest they cut us off abruptly."

The missions agency promised to pay $200,000 yearly during 1993-96 to support existing churches and start new congregations and to transfer titles to all church-owned property from the National Division to the Puerto Rico church by the end of 1996.

The board also voted up to $45,000 to cover legal costs and taxes related to the transfer.

Each United Methodist local church in Puerto Rico will assume liability for its insurance costs on acquiring title to its property.

The board stopped short of a firm commitment to make Puerto Rico eligible for National Division "racial-ethnic" grants after 1992.

The 10,000-member Puerto Rico Annual Conference's move to become an autonomous church affiliated with the United Methodist Church began in 1972.

If the proposal is ratified by United Methodism's 1992 General Conference, autonomy would become effective in 1993.

The Puerto Rico conference is one of the denomination's 72 regional areas. Administratively it is part of the New York Area.

Georgia pastor honored as distinguished evangelist

A longtime evangelist whose congregation has received more than 200 members annually for the past three years has been named the 1991 Distinguished Evangelist of The United Methodist Church by the Foundation for Evangelism.

The Rev. E. Malone Dodson, senior minister of Roswell (Ga.) United Methodist Church, was honored Nov. 2 at a banquet at the foundation's headquarters in Lake Junaluska, N.C.

The foundation recently accorded a similar honor to the Rev. Ralph Mohney, naming him Distinguished Evangelist in Residence. He will continue to relate to the General Board of Discipleship staff whereas Dr. Dodson will remain in the fulltime pastorate.

The Foundation for Evangelism is affiliated with the Discipleship board.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Curb the toxic teaching of intolerance

Professor's speech recalls dangers of old racial and religious stereotypes

By A. JAMES RUDIN

Commentary

Professor Leonard Jeffries, the chairman of the African-American Studies Department at the City College of New York, recently delivered a racially charged speech at the State Black Arts and Cultural Festival in Albany, N.Y.

It attracted enormous media attention, swiftly divided communities in New York City and served to rally many members of the black community.

Clearly Dr. Jeffries, who advocates black superiority and suspicion of other ethnic and racial groups, had touched a nerve.

When I saw the TV coverage of Dr. Jeffries' arrival, my thoughts went back 30 years when five United States Air Force chaplains, including myself, flew from Japan to the Philippines.

Two of my colleagues were Protestant, the others Catholic. The five of us traced our family roots to Africa, Ireland, Mexico, Norway and Eastern Europe.

We became bored discussing military life, and eventually the conversation turned to something that energized us—personal childhood memories.

Our stories all had one dominant theme: the persecution and victimization of our peoples, along with a sense of the superiority of our own racial, religious or ethnic group.

As our plane neared Clark Air Base, we proudly boasted to one another that we no longer subscribed to either the superiority or the conspiratorial theory.

We proudly said, "We are educated people. We know better than to believe in such theories. We are, after all, enlightened people of the 20th century."

The truth is that many of us have inner demons that torment us, demons like group paranoia, fears of conspiracies, racism and cries for group recognition and acclaim.

While we may harbor such destructive thoughts, we usually attempt to eradicate them. But unfortunately, these kinds of demons and many more were clearly present in Dr. Jeffries' speech.

Dr. Jeffries has one central theme: whites are the adversary race, and Jews are the worst whites in their treatment of blacks.

What is so sad about all this is that Dr. Jeffries is no isolated street corner purveyor of hate and bigotry. He teaches at a leading public college and has direct impact upon many students.

One can only imagine what damage Dr. Jeffries has done to his students with his "light versus darkness" theories. Unfortunately, Dr. Jeffries' students must confront a real world of nuances, traces, hints, ambiguity, vagueness, uncertainty and ambivalence.

But Dr. Jeffries doesn't allow for such things and, in so doing, he unfairly shortchanges his students.

What emerges from Dr. Jeffries' ugly racial superiority/conspiracy theories is something both alarming and menacing. It is hatred, prejudice, polarization and, finally, the traditional retreat of all bigots, anti-Semitism.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE PHOTO

Volunteering is a family affair

ESPANOLA, N.M.—Lena Reagle (right), dusting a trophy, and her daughter, Rowena Lloyd (left), cleaning the inside of the trophy display case, are trophies themselves to McCurdy Mission School, related to the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. A former member of the McCurdy staff, Mrs. Reagle, of Corry, Pa., and Mrs. Lloyd, of Spring Lake, Mich., have served as Volunteers in Mission at the school one week annually for the past three years. There they scrub, mend and clip the building and grounds to prepare for the opening of school. This year Mrs. Reagle also embroidered squares for a quilt honoring McCurdy volunteers.

Review

PBS series traces despoiling of American 'Eden'

By TOM GOODHUE

This reviewer normally finds the PBS series "Nature" commendable but none too exciting: the photography is spectacular, the narration absolutely sleep-inducing.

"Land of the Eagle," though, the new 8-hour special edition of "Nature," is quite different.

It surveys the wildlife and undisturbed places of North America to show us how our continent looked hundreds of years ago at the point of first contact between Native Americans and the explorers and settlers from Europe.

Unusual fare

Unlike the usual "Nature" fare, "Land of the Eagle" covers the natural history of a whole continent over a wide period of time, from just before the first voyage of Columbus until 100 years ago.

"Land of the Eagle" begins at a time when the bald eagle roamed the skies from the Chesapeake Bay across the Canadian wilderness, from the Everglades across the Great Plains and the majestic Rockies to sweltering deserts and distant Alaska.

We learn how the eagle was a powerful symbol for the first Americans of their relationship to their Creator, and we see how stunning was the corner of creation—the American version of an Eden—which they inhabited.

The second episode of "Land of the Eagle" covers the early history of Canada, little known in the United States but which in many ways parallels the natural history of the English colonies.

The indigenous people of Canada, for example, originally had no word for "animal" since they did not see themselves as being apart from nature. The moose or the beavers were people, as far as natives were concerned, just a different sort of people than the "two-legged ones" were.

A place for profit

Europeans, on the other hand, saw the land as a place for profit and liquidated whole species to the point of extinction. Once it became profitable for natives to sell furs to European traders, many gladly joined in the slaughter.

"Land of the Eagle" has a few factual errors, however.

One would think by now that most grade-school children, let alone public television producers, would know that the English did not "establish the first permanent settlements in North America, beginning with Jamestown in 1609."

The French founded Quebec in 1608, for example, and the Spanish started St. Augustine in 1565—not to mention the African slaves who fled from Hispanola and settled among the Native Americans on the Pee Dee River in the Carolinas in 1526.

When it comes to religious history, though, "Land of the Eagle" seems to have the story right.

We hear how the Native Americans believed the world was meant for all the creatures in creation.

The faith of English settlers was quite different: They saw the continent as a wilderness to be tamed and reshaped, not as a gift from God which they must cherish and protect.

The producers of "Land of the Eagle" do not conclude, however, that Christianity must inevitably have led Europeans to lay waste to the new land. Instead, this series may help us see how poorly European Christians practiced Christian stewardship and how they were captured by a culture which treated nearly everything as a commodity to be plundered.

Contrast uncomfortable

The contrast between the piety of my Puritan ancestors and that of Native Americans may be an uncomfortable one, but this is a fair presentation of both sides of our history. Perhaps watching it might even encourage a few Christian viewers to practice what we preach by treating creation the way God intends.

"Land of the Eagle" can be seen on most public television stations Nov. 24-27, but check your local listings.

Mr. Goodhue, of Island Park, N.Y., frequently reviews television and films for the Reporter.

PBS PHOTO

"Land of the Eagle" is the first television series to attempt a comprehensive account of the North American continent's natural history and the part that religious belief played in both the protection and the despoiling of the wilderness.

Church's flying lessons get kids high without drugs

By NANCYE M. WILLIS
United Methodist News Service

Some kids in inner-city areas of Washington are getting high—but they aren't using drugs.

At Jones Memorial United Methodist Church, one of the 14 churches where the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence staged a pilot program last year, young people are learning to fly airplanes.

Church member Andrew Clark has been teaching the young people that only level-headed, physically fit people can learn to be aviators.

"If they want to fly, the kids have to take themselves, their intelligence and their bodies very seriously," Mr. Clark said.

"You can't pull an airplane over to the side of the road to collect your thoughts," he added.

"It's very peaceful . . . you can make your own little world in the sky."
—Sandra Fleming, flight student

In the Eastgate-Benning Heights area, where the church is located, 15 cadets and 12 young astronauts are discovering their future in flight.

They are also being exposed to science, math and computers, which Mr. Clark said he hopes will enable them to pursue careers at airports or in related fields.

Brandy Taper, 12, completed a week of ground training and was proclaimed "a natural" by the instructor pilot when she took her first flight this summer.

But for many of the young people, learning about planes and flight requires a great deal of study.

"It's better than school," said Sandra Flemming, 15, "but it is hard work."

She added, "It's very peaceful . . . you can make your own little world in the sky."

That world is different from the one to which they are accustomed.

"When they lie in bed at night, they hear gunshots and sirens," Mr. Clark said of the students.

"Drugs are everywhere. Babies are having babies . . . These kids have attended too many wakes. They are beginning to know fear and they are looking for a tomorrow."

Poem

Let Me Go

When fall's crisp air
embraces and invigorates,
When racing clouds speed across
the arch of heaven,
When falling leaves call me to
frolic with unabandoned delight,
When wild birds gorge themselves
outside my window,
When nostalgia magnetizes me to
childhood's roads and familiar
smells,
Let me go to affirm, on the wind
my love of God and God's
universe.

—AILEEN L. MYERS

History of Hymns

Communion hymn reflects Wesleys' theology

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesus' guest.
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bid all humankind.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Charles Wesley's communion hymn appeared in 1747 in a collection entitled "Hymns for Those That Seek, and Those That have, Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ."

Entitled "The Great Supper," the hymn is a paraphrase of Luke 14:16-24 that begins, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many."

The invitation that this parable contains is applied in the hymn to the Lord's Supper: "O taste the goodness of our God, and eat his flesh and drink his blood" (stanza 3, lines 3 and 4).

The opening stanza expresses the theological emphases of the Wesleyan evangelical revival. A basic tenet is the God-given freedom of all persons to respond to the salvation made possible through Jesus Christ. This idea is found in the line "Let every soul be Jesus' guest."

Throughout Wesleyan hymns the words "every" and "all" resound repeatedly to underline the doctrinal preaching of both John and Charles Wesley in a day when Calvinistic beliefs were strong.

Originally cast in 24 four-line stanzas, the hymn has been reduced to the five stanzas used in American Methodist hymnals beginning with the 1849 edition.

Hursley, one tune associated with this hymn, seems to have first appeared in a Catholic collection published in Vienna about 1774. Other versions of the tune exist with some slight adaptations.

Hursley is the name of a parish in England where John Keble served as minister for 30 years. The tune has been associated with Keble's hymn "Sun of my soul, thou Savior dear."

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Now Thank We All Our God"

Dear Deborah

My minister-son says I shouldn't get divorced

Dear Deborah:

I am 78 years old. My wife of 43 years died some time ago. We had a wonderful marriage, and a couple of years later I married again.

This time I made a big mistake. My son who is a minister begged me not to do it, and now I see he was right. I want to divorce her, and my lawyer says I have grounds. But my son says I made a vow and cannot divorce her.

I do not belong to his church—it is much too fundamentalist for me—but we live in the same town and he will be embarrassed if I do.

What should I do?

Ben

Dear Ben:

You don't say what the mistake was or what your grounds are for a divorce.

I suggest that first you try counseling. Go alone and find someone who specializes in marriage and family counseling. Discuss both your marriage and your relationship with your son.

Perhaps, if your wife is willing, some joint counseling could be helpful, too.

If you decide the marriage cannot be saved there may be some alternatives short of a divorce. The counselor can help you clarify your own priorities and evaluate the consequences of each alternative open to you.

If you are comfortable doing it, you might talk with your own pastor, too.

Usually it is the parents who are upset when a son or daughter rushes into marriage, so your situation is reversed. But I hope you will pray for your son as well as your wife and be able to find a peaceful resolution to this situation.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Being surprised by beauty left its mark on my soul

Moment of inspiration

By WARNER A. HUTCHINSON
Religious News Service

Some moments live timeless in the memory, so pivotal are they in influencing one's life. Such a moment was the summer I discovered beauty.

Barely in my teens, I was camping solo on the floor of Yosemite. Unlike the crowded, polluted conditions that exist now, there was an empty pristine quality to the valley that allowed one to enjoy its wonders.

I remember a solitary climb up the back of Half Dome and then the heart-stopping glory of the valley far below.

Soon after that climb I discovered photographs of that overpowering rock Dome taken by the then scarcely known Ansel Adams. How his eye helped burn the beauty of the place on my soul!

A family that camped next to me befriended me. The father was a cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and when we parted, he gave me a ticket to hear Rudolf Serkin perform Beethoven's "Emperor Concerto" that fall. I knew nothing of classical music, but I was drawn to the concert by curiosity and by the friendship of that kindly cellist.

The music ravished me. It stunned me. It left me limp and exhilarated both at once.

Since that summer, I've been open to being surprised by beauty—and have been grateful for eyes to see it and ears to hear it when it bursts in. It comes unseen but is all the more radiant for that.

Like the poet, we experience sudden joy "When unexpected beauty bums—Like sudden sunlight on the sea."

Mr. Hutchinson, of Coral Gables, Fla., is former general secretary of the American Bible Society.

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It is a common misconception that corporations and foundations donate more funds to non-profit institutions than private individuals. While corporate and foundation donations are vital to our funding efforts, it is the individual donor who makes the difference.

Among these individual donors, I count the many UMW groups and civic groups which have supported MacDonell through the years.

Many individuals assume their donation will not make a significant impact. As the chart illustrates, individual donations comprise more than two-thirds of funds raised for non-profit institutions.

No matter how small a gift, it DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE! The combined impact of individual donations is vital to our continued existence.

Each day at MacDonell, I open envelopes containing gifts ranging from $3 to $5000, more often they are closer to the smaller amount. Each contribution, regardless of the amount, is equally important to the survival of our ministry.

One donor made a difference by underwriting the cost of swimming lessons for all 36 children at the local YMCA. A Methodist Sunday School class makes a difference by remembering each child's birthday with a small gift and hand written card.

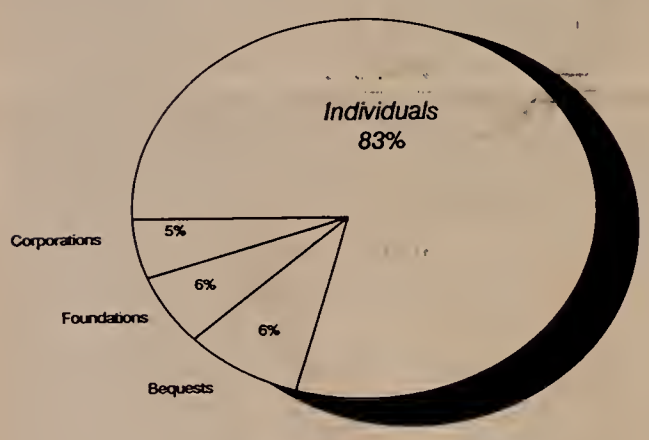
The daily task of supplying each child with food, clothing, medical care, and school supplies while balancing an ever increasing budget is a constant challenge. With your assistance, these challenges can be met and the important mission to provide love and healing to each child can take center stage.

There are numerous ways you can make a difference. Please take time to review the many ways you can make a difference in a child's life — from purchasing an item on the wish list to sending a beautiful Christmas card to a loved one.

To all of you who have supported MacDonell throughout the years, I say THANK YOU! If you are just learning about our mission, I say welcome and please call or visit soon! Remember, YOU can make a difference in a child's life.

— G. J. "Jerry" Bridges
President

Non-Profit Donation Revenues*



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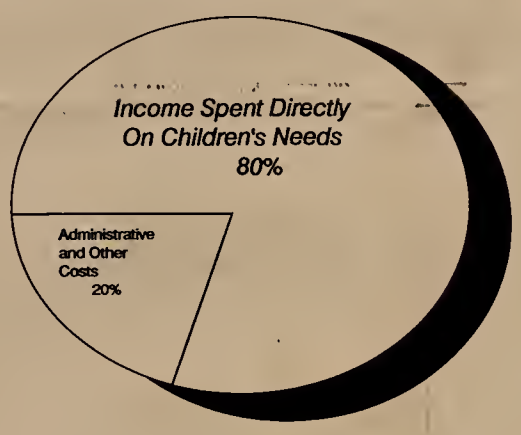
MacDonell United Methodist
CHILDREN'S SERVICES, INC

Allocation of Annual Budget



I want to Make a Difference!

Name: _____ Ph. _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my check for:

☐ Thanksgiving Offering ..... $ _____

☐ Christmas Card Purchase ..... $ _____

_____ Cards @ $5.00 each ..... $ _____

Please enclose your mailing list

☐ Memorial Gift* ..... $ _____

☐ Honorarium Gift* ..... $ _____

☐ Gift I will send

☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Yearly ..... $ _____

☐ Endowment Fund ..... $ _____

☐ Other ..... $ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED ..... $ _____

* In Honor/Memory of: _____

Send Acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Thank You!

Make a Gift to a Loved One a Gift to a Child at MacDonell

Our Christmas cards offer a unique opportunity to touch loved ones on your Christmas list while making a difference in the life of the children at MacDonell. Each card, purchased for a minimum donation of $5, contains a presentation card that will tell friends, family members, and customers that you have given a gift in their name to the children. Send us your Christmas list and our staff will hand-address your beautiful holiday cards. Postage is included in the minimum donation. Gifts are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

Wish List

- school and office supplies
- personal grooming products
- linens and towels
- desk lamps
- hearing and vision screening equipment
- red wagon for campus errands
- kitchen equipment
- Nintendo cartridges
- VCR tapes
- puzzles and games
- coloring books and crayons
- sporting goods
- assorted clocks
- holiday gifts and decorations
- mini-blinds and curtains

It may be more economical to send a check for a specific item to defray shipping charges.

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor

Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

38 NUMBER 26 . Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 NOVEMBER 22, 1991

A powerful and memorial witness

William B. Oden

She listened intently to my words. I was in a small, historically-black, rural church in northern Louisiana on a Shepherd's Visit. I asked about the health of the church, its worship life, its membership and attendance.

It was soon obvious that she was the leader of that congregation, that she held its life together and that she loved her church dearly. She stood up to make sure her bishop heard her clearly. She stated that the church was not what it once was, that the young had moved away and many of the older members had died. She said: "This church was once like a tree with beautiful leaves, but now many of the leaves have fallen and only a few remain on the tree."

I saw an expression of firm faithfulness come over her face. She stood straight and tall as she announced that most of the members were in church every Sunday, that those too ill to come or who were in nursing homes were called upon regularly, that they had Sunday school every Sunday and always paid 100% of their apportionments. She concluded with the words: "I pray for the time when the tree will once again be covered with leaves. I know this will happen because our roots are well nourished."

I was blessed by that Shepherd's Visit.

Over 50% of the United Methodist Churches in Louisiana have fewer than 100 members. Although most of our members are in urban congregations, most of our churches are in small towns and rural areas. If we all had the attitude of this church mother, United Methodism in our conference would be strong and healthy and faithful.

William B. Oden

A Time of Hope, Healing and Renewal

By THE REV. TRACY MACKENZIE,
Member of the Conference Task Force on AIDS.

Magic Johnson, star pro-basketball player for the Los Angeles Lakers, has the HIV-virus. And, the list of people infected with AIDS and affected by AIDS continues to grow.

Several years ago, Dr. C. Everett Koop, former Surgeon General of the United States, made the following prediction:

"In the very near future, there will be two kinds of people in the U.S.: Those who have AIDS and those who will know someone who has AIDS."

These words have never left my mind. AIDS is everywhere and affects every person. AIDS knows no gender, race, class or culture. It is pervasive in our society. The statistics are astounding. According to a recent article in the U.S. News and World Report magazine, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that by the year 2000 "40 million people world-wide will be infected with HIV including an appalling 10 million children."

Recently, the WHO estimated that one-hundred people a day are dying with AIDS. By the end of the decade they expect that number to grow to three-hundred lives a day.

For most of us, the burning question regarding this pandemic is "what can I do?"

The answer to that question involves many practical ways in which one can be in ministry to persons infected with or affected by AIDS. The root of any response by the Christian, however, begins in prayer.

On December 4, throughout the Conference, there will be a statewide prayer service in response to this crisis. It will truly be a "Service of Hope, Healing and Renewal." The services will be held concurrently at the following churches:

Acadiana District — First UMC, Lafayette

Alexandria District — Trinity UMC

Baton Rouge District — Ingleside UMC

Lake Charles District — Oak Park UMC; First UMC, Crowley

Monroe District — Northeast Campus Ministry

New Orleans District — Rayne Memorial UMC

North Shore District — Winan UMC

Ruston District — Louisiana Tech Wesley Foundation

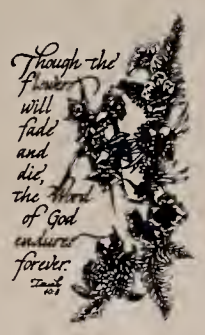
Shreveport District — St. Luke UMC

All services will begin at 7:00 p.m.

During this season of love, let us respond as friends and family in prayer, in love and in hope.

" A SERVICE OF HOPE, HEALING & RENEWAL"
in the midst of the AIDS crisis
Wednesday, December 4, 1991
7:00 PM

sponsored by:
LA. UNITED METHODIST AIDS TASK FORCE
*for persons with AIDS
*for their caregivers
*for family
*significant others
*for ALL of us



A Prayer of Thanksgiving

By BISHOP WILLIAM B. ODEN
(for the observance of "A Service of Hope, Healing and Renewal")

O Lord our God,
Who came to earth as one born among the isolated and hurting of society.

We thank you for your presence in our midst today. You are the source and sustainer of all life. Our hope is born anew through your love.

Your blessing is asked for those who suffer during this season of celebration. We pray especially for those with AIDS and other infirmities. Let those persons know they are in your love and let us reach out one to another as instruments of peace and joy.

This we pray in the name of the one who came through stable-love, a love that knows no bounds.
Amen

Application Information for Marshals and Pages for General Conference

The 1992 General Conference is seeking applicants for the positions of Marshals and Pages. The deadline for the applications is December 1, 1991. Marshals and Pages serve at their own expense. They must be in good physical health and able to work long days. Approximately 150 volunteers will be chosen.

Marshals will be asked to assist visitors and special guests and check credentials. Pages will assist delegates, secretarial staff, bishops and special visitors. Preference will be given to those who can serve the entire Conference from May 5-15, 1992. (The Conference will be held in Louisville, Kentucky.) All those chosen must attend the orientation session on Tuesday, May 5, 1992, at 9:00 a.m.

If you are interested, please fill out the application and sent it to: The Rev. Mark R. Wharff; Holy Cross United Methodist Church; 1200 West Hammer Lane; Stockton, CA 95209.

APPLICATION FOR MARSHALS AND PAGES

1992 General Conference, The United Methodist Church
May 5-15, 1992
Louisville, Kentucky

Name: _____ Telephone: ( ) _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street or Box Number City State Zip

Related to _____ Church in _____
City State

Annual Conference: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

Please Circle Appropriately: Lay Clergy
Male Female
Age: 18-30 31-45 46-60 60+

*Racial/Ethnic Background: _____ Language(s) Spoken: _____

Have you served at previous General Conferences? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, list years of service _____

I would prefer to serve as a ____ Marshal ____ Page ____ Either

List Dates you can serve _____

_____
Applicant's Signature

* Optional, to insure an inclusive corps of volunteers, including bi-lingual Pages and Marshals who might assist non-English speaking delegates and visitors.

Thanksgiving Services Highlighted on VISN

VISN, the 24-hour interfaith network, seen on many television stations around Louisiana, will sponsor several Thanksgiving programs on November 28th. Among viewers' choices are:

An interfaith and bilingual service of Thanksgiving from San Fernando Cathedral, Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Songs of Thanksgiving from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir after the Thanksgiving Service.

Three hours of Thanksgiving entertainment with Willie Nelson: In God's Eyes, Thanksgiving Day, 7 to 8 p.m.

The late Harry Chapin's Broadway hit, Cotton Patch Gospel, Thanksgiving Day, 8 to 11 p.m.

VISN recently passed its 10 million subscriber mark on its third anniversary. It is now carried on 670 systems nationwide, according to Dr. Nelson Price, president and CEO of the VISN Network. Its policies are shaped by a consortium of 28 members representing 54 faith groups from Roman Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox traditions.

Around the Conference

Springhill United Methodist Women held their annual bazaar on October 17th. The "Craft Connection" and the "Sew and Sews" made hundreds of items and many others provided cakes and prepared food for the luncheon and dinner. They even was very successful in raising money for mission projects. Pictured are (from left) Ms. Kaye Cage and Ms. Page Harrison, co-chairpersons of the bazaar.
Ms. Cage is holding one of a set of wise men available and Ms. Harrison is holding a Santa Claus made from a gourd. The Rev. Terral T. Lowe is Springhill's pastor.

Hartzell Mt. Zion UMC in Slidell celebrated Christian Education Sunday, September 22. The theme for the service was: "Sharing Our Faith Story". Miss Idell Vaultz was the speaker. Shown from left are Miss Vaultz and the Rev. Alonzo J. Campbell, pastor of the church.

The Christian Education Teacher Appreciation Breakfast was recently held at First United Methodist Church, Pineville. Pictured left to right are: Mr. Greg Litsey, Youth Education Director; Mrs. Estelle Dameron, speaker for the occasion; and Mr. Bob Nash, chairperson of the Education Committee. The event was sponsored by the United Methodist Men. Mr. Doug Garrett is president. The Rev. Jimmie D. Pyles is pastor of the Pineville Church.

Members of the Luling United Methodist Church Women who visited the MacDonell United Methodist Children's Service this past summer are pictured above. From the left are Mrs. Mildred Pitchford;Mrs. Ann Wigle; Ms. Rosemary Robinson; Mrs. G. J. Bridges, MacDonell president; Mrs. Linda Fugate; Mrs. Joyce Rankin; and Ms. Joyce Chancellor.

Calling All United Methodist Scholars

The Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals has received a major grant from The Lilly Endowment to study the intersections of Mainstream Protestantism and the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. The foundation will support research and scholarly endeavors, but they also want to be in communication with participants in these traditions who would be willing to share personal perceptions and experiences. The Institute asks that pastors and laypersons send their reflections on the growing or declining influences of these traditions.

They are asking for a response to these questions, has the interaction of these three movements changed what you sing? How do you think these movements are stereotyped? Do you think the charismatic style of worship has influenced your worship? What do you think are the pressing questions these movements raise for each other in today's church? Anecdotal materials and personal narratives are most welcome. Suggestions about bibliography, publications or newsletters, or recommendations about possible avenues for future research would also be appreciated.

Please send any materials to Dr. Edith L. Blumhofer, Project Director, Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187.

In Memoriam

The Rev. James W. Wilson died October 19, 1991. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Adell W. Wilson. During his 45 years of active ministry in Louisiana, Rev. Wilson served as a District Superintendent and Associate Treasurer of the Conference.

Mr. Dudley V. Snow, active layman of the Shreveport District died this past August following a lengthy illness, former District Lay Leader and a member of the 1968 General Conference.

Editorial

Magic Johnson, our faith and us

How might the Christian faith shape our perspective on the news that a popular sports superstar has the deadly HIV virus?

Professional basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson jolted people from all walks of life by disclosing that be has contracted the AIDS-related virus and announcing the subsequent end of his basketball career.

Since Mr. Johnson's public revelation two weeks ago, scarcely a day has passed without media attention.

Most attention, positive and negative, has focused on predictable issues: how he acquired tbe HIV virus, his loss to professional basketball and his possible role as a spokesperson in the fight against AIDS.

We believe, however, that the primary reason Mr. Johnson's story has triggered shockwaves across a wide spectrum of society goes beyond such temporal matters.

Rather, the sudden fall of a cultural idol from the pinnacle of success into the pit of a life-threatening disease touches a widespread spiritual chord: the oft-suppressed awareness of life's preciousness and fragility.

Hence, even as natural disasters such as earthquakes reverse tbe fortunes of many in a heartbeat, Mr. Johnson's personal tragedy challenges us to probe our spiritual depths for insight and meaning.

We suggest that the following observations be used to initiate such a probe among individual Christians and in church discussion groups.

■ **In God's plan for human life, our actions have consequences—and so do our reactions.** Critics of Mr. Johnson's admittedly promiscuous sexual conduct have rightly cautioned against confusing his personal charisma with sainthood and reminded us that we tend to "reap what we sow."

That's true. It's also true that God wills that even sinners should not perish—and all of us fall into that category! Rather, Christians should proclaim to ourselves and others the good news of God's grace, namely that the opportunity is always present to abandon our errant ways and seek forgiveness.

■ **Redemptive opportunities can be found in the midst of nearly any calamity.** To his credit, Mr. Johnson, in public, at least, has eschewed self-pity and been fortbright about how he contracted the HIV virus. He has pledged to help lead public efforts to combat AIDS.

We as Christians should affirm Mr. Johnson's stated intent and pray that his considerable visibility and appeal does, in fact, promote those efforts—including the message that the only responsible "safe sex" is that which is confined to monogamous marital relationships.

■ **God does not guarantee us good health or worldly success.** Tbis is bad news to a culture absorbed with body worship and material wealth. As a bearer of that culture, Mr. Johnson has acknowledged that he didn't believe he was vulnerable to things that threaten less gifted or successful people such as physical disabilities or an untimely end to one's career.

In the face of such attitudes, Christians are called to proclaim that neither worldly success nor material well-being make life worth living. The only "guarantees" anyone can count on are God's Word and God's love.

My Witness

We're all enriched by our retired bishops

By WOODIE W. WHITE

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Bishop Woodie W. White is episcopal leader of United Methodism's Illinois Area. His column is reprinted by permission from the Central Illinois conference edition of the Reporter.

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

My sense of inadequacy as a bishop of the church is never more glaring than when I attend a meeting of the Council of Bishops.

The Council is composed of all United Methodist bisbops, active and retired, in the United States, Europe, Africa, and the Pbilippines. We recently held our fall meeting (see UMR, Nov. 15 and elsewhere in this issue).

The retired bishops remain giants in my assessment. I still cannot address them by first names! Their presence and participation in the Council are valued. Their years of experience, counsel, and insights keep us on track and prevent us from veering too far off course.

I covet moments to chat witb them informally or to share a meal. I am the richer as is the church for their continuing contributions even in their years of retirement.

Standing ovation given

Bishop Nolan B. Harmon, who will be 100 years old in July, still attends Council meetings. At our last meeting he spoke several times. He now must be assisted to the microphone. There is great admiration and respect for this servant of the church. Following his statement he received a standing ovation.

No bishop has served as secretary of the Council as long as Bishop Roy H. Short, 1956-72. Indeed, he served as a bishop for 30 years. During our most recent meeting he shared his reflections on a new biography of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, one of the great bishops of Methodism.

Although the years have taken their toll on the body, Bishop Short's mind is sharp, insights respected, and when he speaks it is like reading history. We sat spellbound as he recalled events and stories out of the life of Bishop Oxnam and the church.

My first appointment

I received my first appointment from Bishop James K. Matthews, who was then serving his first quadrennium as a newly elected bishop assigned to the Boston Area. I have long held him in high esteem. His words at each Council meeting are heeded; when he speaks I listen. He continues to be one of the most progressive voices in the Council.

Retired bishops have voice but not vote in the Council and thank God they continue to speak. Bishop Prince Albert Taylor Jr., former bishop of Liberia, rose to give us direction, as did Bishop Roy C. Nichols.

I consider Bishop Nichols among the finest preachers in our church. He was an outstanding pastor in California and New York. When he was elected in 1968 he was serving as pastor of Salem UMC in New York City, where I was baptized (then they called it christened) 56 years ago!

He's always clear

Bishop Dwight E. Loder is unique. Always clear in his convictions, articulate, persuasive, he seems to know how to bring not only direction in a confused situation, but relief with bis always appropriate sense of humor in a particularly tense moment.

Bishop Paul A. Duffey is knowledgeable of Council proceedings, as are Bishop H. Ellis Finger Jr. and Bisbop Ralph T. Alton. They help us appreciate its history and heritage. Tbey prevent us from re-inventing the wheel and stepping on ecclesiastical land mines.

Theological debates and discussion would be small talk witbout the valued contribution of Bishops James M. Ault, William R. Cannon, Wayne K. Clymer, and Mack B. Stokes. We are reminded again and again of our global nature as a church by Bishop Hermann L. Sticber and Bishop Ole Borgen, both of whom served areas in Europe.

Makes us appear retired

Bishop Leontine T. Kelly served only four years as an active bishop. She made the most of them, and now her eloquence, compassion, and evangelical fervor impact the Council in her retirement as it did before. To say that she is not in the "active" relationship is only a technicality. Her schedule and commitments to a variety of issues and causes make many of us "active" bishops appear retired.

Each of these bishops, as well as other retired bishops, took the floor at our recent Council meeting. They made valuable contributions to our deliberations.

Retirement has not meant total withdrawal from the life of the church. Many continue to preach and teach and serve in important capacities. They keep before us, especially the younger bishops, tbe mission of the church. When we are prone to panic they give us perspective. Or when we take ourselves too seriously they bring us down to earth.

In the difficult and often tense moments of the life of the church and Council, I am grateful that these servants of Christ are ever present in body and in spirit.

Letters to the Editor

Christian 'Trekkers' should pray for others

As a devoted Trekker since 1966, I appreciated a large part of Associate Editor Cynthia Astle's sentiments in her Nov. 8 column about the death of "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry.

However, I must respond to Ms. Astle's statement that she and Gene Roddenberry did not share the same faitb. That is certainly true.

In the official Star Trek Fan Club Magazine a year or so ago, Mr. Roddenberry spoke out on bis view of the future. Tbe article was very interesting but I was borrified to find that Mr. Roddenberry gave his blunt opinion to the effect that religion was a major part of man's problem and as soon as humanity forgot God, the better.

I immediately wrote to the Fan Club Magazine to say that it seemed inappropriate for Mr. Roddenberry to insult so deliberately a large percentage of his followers who are Christians and Trekkers at the same time. It really affected my appreciation for Mr. Roddenberry's work.

Please pray for those many Trekkers who currently are "turned off" of Christianity and whose opinions have been bolstered by the bumanism of Gene Roddenberry for 25 years. May we Christian Trekkers have the opportunity to share with them how they can truly "Live long and prosper."

Carlotta M. Barnes
Houston, Texas

'Christian chauvinism' hit

Your Nov. 8 editorial headlined, "Are you 'addicted' to religion?" is an example of what I call Christian chauvinism.

You are assuming that just because someone talks about overcoming obsessive behavior in "secular" terms that they therefore believe that the "grace" that allows for that transformation does not come from some "higher power" or God.

That is not to say that there may be some "secular" therapists wbo think that they provide the "grace" that "converts" their clients. But any self-respecting therapist realizes that he/she can only attempt to create a situation in which tbe client can accept the "grace" wbicb God has already provided.

We as Christians need to understand that God's grace is only revealed by Jesus Christ, not created by or delivered through Jesus Christ. Jesus only revealed what had been true about God from tbe beginning of time.

God's grace is there whenever we are willing to repent and accept it. You don't have to have ever heard of Jesus to do this. Grace is something that is available to all mankind.

I'm sure tbat God can determine for himself who is deserving of bis grace and who is not. God needs no help from any of us Christian chauvinists.

John A. Stopple
Des Peres, Missouri

Send books to Africa U.

A few months after I retired from teaching in a community college, I was in the Mindolo Ecumenical Center in Kitwe, Zambia.

There was a beautiful library building not very full of books. When I got home I asked my friends on the teaching staff for new books that publishers had sent tbem and they would not use. We packed them into cartons which fit into the international mailing sacks.

When I read in the Oct. 25 issue of the Reporter about the library in the Africa University, I remembered how easy it was to get textbooks when I tried. I hope many who read this will enjoy the experiences of sending books to our university in Africa.

Charles W. Tryon
La Verne, California

Heaven discussed

In response to Jeanne Gunderson's letter of Oct. 25 concerning the lack of biblical references to heaven, I hasten to tell her, there are more tban 160 references to heaven in the Bible.

These references cover heaven as God's dwelling place; heaven as the future dwelling place of the righteous; and yes, 40 or more references to heaven's physical appearance.

For starters, she needs to spend time in the Psalms, the books of the major prophets and all throughout the New Testament. I have taught United Methodists for 30 years and we all take joy in the fact, we bave this heavenly destination.

We will never be sorrowful or weep. We will be at peace. We will delight in tbe clear and beautiful streams (no pollution). We will eat bountifully of the unblemished fruit crop (no alar) and we will claim many blessings that God has prepared for us. Best of all we will be with Jesus, face to face.

Sara Flippin
Milan, Tennessee

Pontius' Puddle

What others are saying

"I think we need to sit down and think through again what worsbip is all about, that it is other-directed rather than self-directed. God should be the focus of our worship. When we become the focus it tends toward entertainment. . . . The function of worship is to edify, not entertain."

—Robert Wetzler, church music composer and publisher.

* * *

"In Christ all coheres not by what our eyes see but by what our faith knows."

—Martin Marty, professor of church history, University of Chicago.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' He said, 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?' " (RSV)

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: 1 John 4:12)

Readings for week of Nov. 25

Monday: Psalms 92
Tuesday: Psalms 93
Wednesday: Jeremiah 23:1-6
Thursday: Jeremiah 23:23-32
Friday: John 18:33-37
Saturday: Revelation 1:4b-8
Sunday: Revelation 1:12-18a

Here I Stand

Crisis in care for elderly should concern Christians

By ANNABELLE L. KENWARD

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Annabelle L. Kenward is a member of St. Marks United Methodist Church in Sacramento, Calif. (California-Nevada conference).

Our congregations need to educate ourselves, our families and the public about the implications of increased life expectancies and the real possibility that many people will someday need long-term care.

In fact, our nation is facing dramatic increases in tbe demand for long-term care. The proportion of people in the U.S. over age 65 will jump from 13 percent to 20 percent by the year 2030. The population 85 years of age and older is the fastest growing age group in the country.

Concern and reverence for older persons is theologically grounded in the doctrine of creation and the precious uniqueness of all passages of life. Hence, we must recognize the spiritual and ethical need for understanding of, and involvement in, the last stage of life for a growing segment of the elderly.

According to The New England Journal of Medicine, 50 percent of those who became 65 in 1990 will spend some time in a nursing home—33 percent at least three months, 24 percent at least one year and 9 percent at least five years.

Also, studies show that the United Methodist Church is an aging church. Older single women are becoming a major segment of our church and need our concern.

Unfortunately, many view long-term care as an issue affecting a small number of the powerless in our society. Yet it is likely to evolve into a crisis that will affect the entire nation by the year 2000.

The 1988 General Conference Resolution on Aging states that the church is called to be concerned, not only for its own, but also for all older people in our society. If we are unprepared, that financial and emotional crisis of long-term care will be devastating for us all.

GOD WELCOMES PRAYER —

AND SO DO OUR MISSIONARIES!

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Use the 1992 *Prayer Calendar* to strengthen mission around the world.

Order your gift copies of the *Prayer Calendar* (#1471) @ $5.00 plus postage and handling from Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800.

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POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275.

Faith watch

LAND DONATED: Government officials in Parnu, Estonia recently donated nearly 8 acres of land, including a park, as the new site of the United Methodist congregation there, said the Rev. **Ullas Tankler**, pastor. The congregation intends to construct a new sanctuary as well as a children's center on the site. "The city government is very interested in having us build a new church there," said Mr. Tankler in a letter to the Reporter. "We are grateful and excited." The Estonian land grant follows the recent dedication of 10 acres for the new United Methodist congregation in Ekaterinburg, Russia (see UMR, Oct. 4).

EARLY RETIREMENT: United Methodist Bishop **Ernest W. Newman**, Nashville, has announced he will take early retirement in 1992. Bishop Newman, 63, was elected to the episcopacy in 1984, the first black clergyman elected a bishop in United Methodism's Southeastern Jurisdiction. His retirement brings to 16 the number of bishops to be elected at jurisdictional conferences next July.

Ernest W. Newman

BIBLE HOUSE DEDICATED: A newly refurbished Bible House in central Moscow was dedicated in a ceremony which attracted government officials, Orthodox and Protestant church representatives, and international visitors this month. The Rev. **Alesander Borisov**, an Orthodox priest, Moscow city councilor, and the newly-elected president of the board of the Bible Society in Russia, led the ceremony, and declared the opening of the Bible House "a miracle in the light of Russian history this century." Dr. **James Billington**, director of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., delivered a speech in Russian, stating, "This is not only the opening of the Bible House, but a new start to Bible work in this country. Central in our faith is the resurrection; we are now witnessing the resurrection of a country."

COUPONS FOR MISSIONS: Clipping coupons save consumers money. But church volunteers in Denver have used a coupon campaign to raise at least $38,000 in two years for missions. Some 70 volunteers clip coupons, and place them on respective products within at King Soopers food store. Shoppers are invited to donate the money saved from the coupon to an interfaith cooperative called Capitol Hill United Ministries. The Rev. **Paul Kottke**, pastor of Warren United Methodist Church in Denver, told the Rocky Mountain conference edition of the Reporter that the money is used for agencies which serve the hungry, the homeless; persons with mental illness; AIDS patients; and children and youth. Warren and St. Paul's United Methodist Churches are members of the cooperative.

REDISCOVERY OF ROOTS: Pope **John Paul II** said that a rediscovery of Christian roots is the key to a united Europe, long split between communism and capitalism. Speaking to 50 Christian intellectuals at the conclusion of a four-day symposium at the Vatican, the pope urged them to act as mediators to help heal Europe's wounds. The pope called for dialogue among Christians and between Christians and non-Christians to strengthen European culture. As he has done in the past, he also hit out against scientific and technological developments carried out without reference to ethics.

KEEPS JOB: The intervention of three past presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention has enabled the Rev. **Paige Patterson** to keep his job as president of Criswell College in Dallas despite a move by the school's trustees to remove him from the office. In a six-hour meeting, the Rev. **Joel Gregory**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, joined with the Rev. **W.A. Criswell**, senior pastor, to persuade trustees to "wait on the Lord" in connection with any leadership changes at the college. The fundamentalist school was founded by First Baptist Church in 1970.

UM missionary decides to stay in strife-torn Haiti

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Though most of the American missionary community evacuated recently from the island-nation of Haiti, United Methodism's missionary there asked to stay and show the Haitians "the love and faith of Christ."

In a letter to the General Board of Global Ministries World Division dated Oct. 24, Cecilia Manness asked the United Methodist Church to stand by her decision to stay in Haiti.

The nation is in crisis following a military coup which overthrew Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

She has options

"Cecilia has the option of coming home or staying, and she wants to wait and see how the situation is from day to day," said Barbara C. Pessoa, staff executive for the Latin American and Caribbean office.

"We talked to her on Nov. 8, and they have plenty of food, and diesel fuel for their generator."

Ms. Manness and her husband, Bill, coordinate United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission work teams who come to Haiti each year (see UMR, July 19.)

"Cecilia is trying to hold fast and help the Haitian people in this time in their lives," Ms. Pessoa said.

In her missionary letter Ms. Manness said some people asked why she and Bill decided to stay in Haiti.

She has answered by saying, "Who is a missionary? One that is sent to display the love and faith of Christ.

"Therefore I have a problem running out on people that might need someone just to listen," continued Ms. Manness.

"The situation here is bad, but sometimes just having someone to talk to and share with makes the problems seem much smaller than we thought.

'What kind of faith?'

"What kind of faith are we showing if we leave when things get tough? These people need to know we love them through the good and bad times.

"This morning we had a friend visit us and he does not even claim to be a believing Christian. However, his question to us was, 'Where are all the missionaries? Do they come to Haiti for the big nice house, someone to cook and clean for them, drive their air-conditioned cars, and live in the sun and have an easy life? People need them now, but they are leaving'. . .

"I truly believe they have given us the opportunity to be an example to the people whom we have come to love and respect," wrote Ms. Manness.

One person who works with her in Haiti is Doug Hendricks of Agape Flights in Sarasota, Fla.

He told the Reporter he received word that out of some 400 missionaries assigned to Haiti from various religious organizations, only 35 remain on the island.

The flight service, which carries cargo and mail to the missionary community, is at a standstill, due to the economic sanctions on Haiti. Mr. Hendricks said the embargo could hinder communication and supplies getting to the Mannesses.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

United Methodist missionary Cecilia Manness displays some of the crafts of Haiti during the Volunteers-in-Mission conference this past summer. Mrs. Manness has opted to stay in strife-torn Haiti "to show Christ's love" to Haitians stricken by upheaval following a military coup.

Bishops deplore Haiti coup

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—The United Methodist Council of Bishops have deplored the recent developments in Haiti which deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and forced him into exile.

The bishops' resolution said that the "tiny nation with 65 percent unemployment, 85 percent illiteracy and an average annual wage of $300 is now experiencing ... untold suffering, fear and death as a result of the military coup."

In addition, the resolution pointed out, the situation has resulted in anxiety and grief in Haitian communities in the United States and elsewhere.

The resolution urged the Organization of American States, the United Nations, the United States and other governments to continue "vigorous diplomatic efforts to restore the properly elected government in Haiti."

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

Health-care plan sparks legislative briefing

Church's policymakers, journalists get advance look at 1992 General Conference

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
and JOHN A. LOVELACE
Reporter Staff

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Some top United Methodist policymakers and journalists got a look at parts of the church's main legislative agenda—including a proposed new churchwide health-care plan—at a news briefing Nov. 15-17.

Similar briefings are held every four years, typically some six months ahead of the church's General Conferences. The next General Conference is scheduled May 5-15, 1992, in Louisville.

The briefings allow heads of delegations from the 72 annual conferences and journalists to question leaders of both official and unofficial United Methodist bodies about their groups' legislative intentions.

Virtually all legislative proposals presented last week are subject to General Conference approval before they become United Methodist law or policy embodied in church's Book of Discipline or Book of Resolutions.

Churchwide health plan

The freshest report came from the General Board of Pensions, which had met earlier last week in Chicago.

Presenting details previously unavailable to the press, the pensions board is calling for a denominational health care program in the United States which would be mandatory for all ordained clergy and optional for the church's lay and diaconal ministry employees.

James F. Parker
. . . church-wide health plan

Pensions board chief executive the Rev. James F. Parker said the plan's two greatest benefits will be greater claims predictability and a dampening of premium volatility.

Savings in premiums of up to $10 million annually are predicted by 1994.

The church's two top coordinating bodies—the General Council on Ministries which oversees program and the General Council on Finance and Administration which oversees finances—stirred considerable news-briefing interest with reports on items assigned to them.

The General Council on Ministries will officially receive the report of the Committee to Study Homosexuality at the council's meeting in early December. The 24-member committee is asking that the General Conference receive the 35-page printed report and commend it for study and use across the whole church.

Committee is divided

As indicated following the committee's final meeting Aug. 24, 17 members favor withdrawing the church's current condemnation of homosexual practice; another four favor retaining it.

But the committee unanimously supports a call for a new paragraph in the church's Social Principles supporting "certain basic human rights and civil liberties" for all persons, including homosexuals.

The General Council on Finance and Administration previewed the church's general budget for 1993-96, indicating an expected rise from the $417 million during 1989-92 to $495 million for the following four years.

General Treasurer Clifford Droke told the news briefing, "If the General Conference debate is framed around the economy and peoples' feelings about money, this proposal will have great difficulty. If the debate, though, is in terms of mission and ministry, people will want this."

For those same four years, 1993-96, the General Conference will be asked to adopt three special programs for churchwide emphasis: Campus ministry, "Peace with Justice" and substance abuse and related violence.

Other major legislative topics aired during the pre-General Conference news briefing included:

- "Sexual Harassment in Church and Society in the United States." The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women will propose additions to a resolution on this topic adopted by the 1988 General Conference calling for education on the problem at every level of the church.
- A change in the wording related to United Methodist ministers' appointments from "guaranteed" to "annual."
- Provision for immediate removal of a pastor from a pastoral charge "under extreme circumstances of conflict" but to accompany this suspension with financial support. Current church law allows a leave of absence in this situation, but the committee recommending the change notes that this "carries with it drastic financial consequences."
- Removal of Book of Discipline language that is "bitterly polemic and often anti-Roman Catholic in character." This proposal comes from the church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.
- Encourage local churches to make investments "consistent with the church's Social Principles." The General Board of Church and Society advocates this change to include local churches in language which currently applies primarily to general agencies and annual conferences.
- Request for permission to raise $2 million to launch national United Methodist television ads. The General Commission on Communications seeks this authority to prepare and air ads that will be "emotional, high quality but not hard-sell."

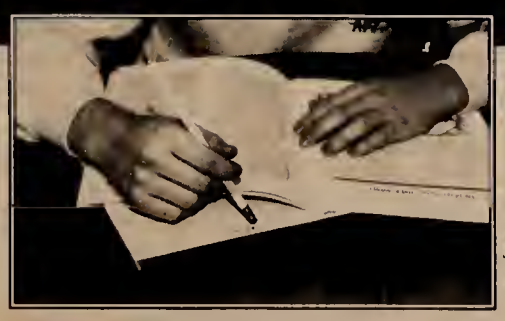
In addition to hearing from representatives of the church's general agencies, the news briefing heard leaders of some unofficial special-interest groups within the church.

The Methodist Federation for Social Action indicated its emphasis on confronting racism in church and society and sexism in the church.

Good News, generally identified as the church's evangelical caucus, indicated its support for moving the headquarters of the General Board of Global Ministries out of New York City (a task force directed to study the feasibility of such a move is recommending that the board be moved) and support for retaining the Discipline's current condemnatory language regarding the practice of homosexuality.

Affirmation, identified as consisting of United Methodists for lesbian, gay and bisexual concerns, is calling on the church to repudiate what Affirmation labels its "institutional heterosexism."

EDUCATION : Important to United Methodists for 125 years



Ervin Dailey Photo

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UMR editors honored in national competition

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Editors of national and regional editions published by the United Methodist Reporter won high honors Nov. 15 in annual competition sponsored by the United Methodist Association of Communicators.

The association's annual meeting was held in conjunction with the news briefing for delegates and media persons responsible for major roles at the church's policymaking General Conference May 5-15, 1992, in Louisville (see story above).

The Reporter's editorial staff won certificates of merit in three of the four competition categories for newspapers: General excellence, editorial content and writing, and use of illustrative material.

Staff members cited in all three categories were Associate Editors Cynthia B. Astle, Diane Huie Balay, Denise J. Stovall, Stephen L. Swecker and Managing Editor John A. Lovelace.

'Consistently excels'

The judge said the Reporter "consistently excels in wide-ranging coverage of United Methodist events of local and national significance."

The judge awarded the Reporter staff the maximum 40 points in the writing and editorial content category.

The Reporter's coverage of United Methodist involvement in and reactions to the Persian Gulf war garnered 71 out of a possible 72 points. The judge called the coverage a "great job" and said the staff's "pride of publication shows."

In addition to awards to the five-member staff, judges awarded individual certificates of merit to Mr. Swecker for two editorials and to Ms. Astle for a news story.

Mr. Swecker's works—an editorial titled "Games-as-God: Perilous Idolatry" and one titled "Clergywomen steppin' out: The reformers of our time?" were the only ones cited for newspapers with circulation above 15,000.

Only one story cited

Ms. Astle's story about creation of the first United Methodist congregation in the Soviet Union was the only news story cited in the entire competition.

Editors of four regional editions published by the Reporter also won certificates of merit in the writing competition.

Cited for editorials were Ann Greene Whiting, "Zion's Herald," Boston; the Rev. R. Thomas Slack, West Ohio conference; and Bettie Wilson Story, Central Illinois conference.

Judges also cited Ms. Whiting for her series of articles reporting on the impact of Rhode Island credit unions' failures on churches and cited Ms. Story for a feature story about a puppet named Dave, identified as "an imperfect disciple [who] preaches a simple message."

The Rev. Boyce A. Bowdon, editor of the Oklahoma conference edition of The United Methodist Review—the Reporter's biweekly publication—won a certificate of merit for a feature story titled "Mom, I Think I Have AIDS."

The top honor in the newspaper category, the Award of Excellence, was given in a tie to the Rev. Jim Skillington of the Baltimore conference and Lynne Bevan De Michele of the Indiana Area.

The association honored Laura J. Okumu, editor of the churchwide promotional magazine, "The Interpreter," as "Communicator of the Year." She has been on the magazine's staff since 1983.

Faith connections

BISHOPS IN DANGER: Two United Methodist bishops in Zaire, Ngoy **Kimba Wakadilo** (North Sbaha Area) and **Kainda Katembo** (Southern Zaire Area), are in immediate danger and have gone into biding, the United Methodist Council of Bishops were told at a recent meeting at Lake Junaluska. In a resolution, the bishops called on all parties involved in the conflict to end the violence and destruction to people and property. The hishops also called on U.S. President George Bush and Secretary James Baker to use their offices to set up negotiations hetween rival factions and to belp establish a transitional government.

JUNE AMMONS MEMORIAL: A memorial fund to establish a permanent library for United Methodism's Africa University in Zimhahwe was announced hy United Methodist Bishop **Edsel A. Ammons** (West Ohio Area). The fund is in memory of his late wife, **June Ammons**. To date, more tban $42,000 has been donated to the memorial fund.

ACCEPTS POSITION: The Rev. **David Lowes Watson**, executive secretary of Covenant Discipleship and Christian Formation at the General Board of Discipleship, has accepted the newly created post of professor of theology and congregational life and mission at United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington. He will assume his new post next July. Dr. Watson was the initiator of the Covenant Discipleship program—a modern version of John Wesley's class meetings—in use in more than 1,000 United Methodist congregations. He also has been instrumental in the re-institution of the historic Wesleyan position of Class Leader—a lay spiritual adviser—in local congegations.

David Lowes Watson

'COMPASSION FATIGUE': During the first nine months of 1991, the United Methodist Committee on Relief has responded to 58 disasters, or one every 4.6 days, says the Rev. **R. Bruce Weaver**, the committee's interim chief executive. The agency also responded to requests from persons who are trying to deal with root causes of hunger. "We could hide behind 'compassion fatigue' as we struggle daily with how to make UMCOR dollars stretch around the glohe, especially when we see that war is more often the cause of displaced persons, famine and disease than natural disasters," said Dr. Weaver. "Your staff may hecome discouraged hy the enormity of the task, often working with very limited funds, hut as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, 'We may be knocked down, but we are never knocked out.' "

Compiled from news and staff reports

Central Europe's 'opening' uplifts UMs there

Bishop Heinrich Bolleter says UM churches have sprouted since communism's downfall

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—While the morning sun sparkled on nearby Lake Junaluska, United Methodist Bishop Heinricb Bolleter told ahout a churcb on the move an ocean away.

The Central and Southern Europe Area bishop told the Reporter about what he calls "the opening"—the new freedom of religious expression in Eastern Europe.

He told of puppets, bright new paint, congregations found, and 400 children attending United Methodist Sunday school under the trees of a public park near the Black Sea.

Heinrich Bolleter
. . . Central European bishop

'Old ladies' remained

In Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, he said, five "old ladies" were all that remained of a large downtown churcb. Their building had heen confiscated and leaders dispersed hy the state at the close of World War II.

The five women, meeting in homes each week, prayed for years for a new start in the church.

Two young couples observing the weekly meeting asked what the women were doing. They joined the prayer group, and slowly the nucleus became a congregation.

"In 1988, against all experience of the past," Bishop Bolleter said, "the state gave permission for the annual conference to send an untrained young pastor to the church."

The pastor asked the state for a meeting space. Although he was refused, he returned every week to ask again and again.

"The official responsible asked, 'What kind of person is this pastor that he doesn't stop asking?' " the hishop continued. "When he found out, the official became a Christian, and within three weeks they had a three-story house to meet in."

But the group was growing so rapidly they needed even more space. By 1990 they had 400 members, average age 23.

They were allowed to use the original church huilding on Sundays and they have restored it.

With its fresh yellow and white paint, "it is shining among all the dirty, gray huildings of the rest of the city," Bishop Bolleter said.

Bulgaria once had 16 Methodist churches, he said. Though some remained open, the last time they had official contact with the West was 1947. Bishop Bolleter said he was the first United Methodist bishop to go there.

Pastors imprisoned

Pastors and some church memhers had been imprisoned 12 to 16 years and treated harshly in work camps, he said. Many died.

The government registered all church memhers and watched their movements, the hishop said. Secret police stood at the church steps to find out who was attending worship.

After "the opening" last year, one Methodist pastor who had heen imprisoned, now 86 years old, began to search for memhers of his congregation. He found 200 of them to begin anew.

Near the Black Sea in Varna, Bulgaria, the Rev. Bedross Altunian, the son of a United Methodist pastor, was ordained by Bishop Bolleter.

When Mr. Altunian started searching for former members of the Methodist congregation, he found 15 who wanted to start again.

Church turned theater

Their church building, confiscated years earlier, had heen turned into a puppet theater of international renown.

The 15 people, who first met together on Christmas 1990, have grown to 200.

Squeezed into a small meeting room, they had no place for the children to have Sunday school. So some 400 children attended Sunday school classes under the trees in the puhlic square.

Church members worried ahout what to do with the children in the winter so they thought ahout their original home, the church-turned-puppet-theater, also on the square.

But the puppet theater was so popular that church memhers did not want to ask for the huilding's return. Instead they got permission for children to hold Sunday school classes there.

In addition, they persuaded the "atbeist" puppeteers to develop a presentation of the story of the life of Christ which will open to the public this Christmas. United Methodists were consultants on the script, and the Central and Southern European conference helped underwrite the expenses.

Bishop Bolleter says he hopes a broadcast-quality video will be made of the puppet presentation. Such a video could have wide possihilities, he said.

Poland takes big step

The church in Poland has always been in a very difficult situation, the hishop said. Polish United Methodists have been very dependent on the wider church, hut now they have taken a hig step.

With their proximity to the Ukraine and their historic relationship to tbe Ukranian people, the Polish members want to expand their mission into the Ukraine.

"God has cared for us in the rnost difficult situations. Now, although we don't have much, we want to help others," the church members said, according to Bishop Bolleter.

Economic upheaval troubles churches

Reporter Staff Special

New thrusts and new initiatives in the former Soviet block are not without prohlems for the church, Bishop Heinrich Bolleter told tbe Reporter.

The economic difficulties are enormous. Many people are starving, unemployed and have no salaries, he said.

Free market threat

"The free market has become a threat to these people," he said. "People of good hope who started small businesses have been wiped out hy westerners who are hringing in their overproduction and undercutting local prices.

"All initiatives are killed. Even farmers have no chance to sell what they grow, and the crops are rotting in the fields," he said.

Economic conditions there leave the Eastern European United Methodist churches financially dependent upon United Methodists in western countries, be said.

For example, some 44 percent of the total hudget of Eastern European churches is contrihuted hy United Methodists in the United States through the General Board of Global Ministries through hlock grants and Advance Specials.

The United Methodist annual conference that includes Switzerland and France contrihutes some 50 percent of their budgets, he said.

West German United Methodist churches are contributing to the support of East German churches.

'Don't forget'

Bishop Bolleter said he is very concerned that the affluent western churches "are going very openly to support [churches, missions and initiatives in] the Soviet Union. We don't want them to forget what's in hetween."

At present Poland has 24 pastors serving 45 United Methodist local churches; Hungary, 11 pastors, 36 churches; Czechoslovakia, 19 pastors, 38 churches; Yugoslavia, 12 pastors, 34 churches; Bulgaria, 4 pastors, 5 churches.

Many were disbanded

Many congregations, initially Methodist, that were disbanded hy the communist regimes chose to become United Methodist when they reorganized. They have met all qualifications of heing United Methodist churches according to the Book of Discipline, according to Bishop Bolleter.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

Return of property urged

Reporter Staff Special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Eastern European United Methodists are reporting difficulties in reclaiming expropriated church property.

In response, the United Methodist Council of Bishops is seeking to assist them through ecumenical and diplomatic channels.

At their recent meeting at Lake Junaluska, the bishops asked council secretary bishop Melvin G. Talbert (San Francisco Area) to coordinate efforts to address the problem through the World Council of Churches, the World Methodist Council and diplomatic channels.

"It has been observed," the Administrative Concerns Committee reported to the council, "that the national churches, in some countries the Roman Catholic or the Orthodox Church, receive preferential treatment [in recovering property].

"The minority churches like the United Methodist Church are put off or even rejected when they sue for recovery of their properties.

"Almost all of these buildings were formerly purchased or built by the United Methodist Church in the United States, or built by the predecessor/corporate bodies," the report read.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

Open letter #2 to United Methodist readers

INTRODUCING THE TEAM FOR THE BEESON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING AND PASTORAL LEADERSHIP.

On behalf of the trustees and faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary, I am pleased to announce the following appointments:

ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FACULTY

Dr. Donald Demaray
Senior Beeson Professor of Biblical Preaching; Chair, Beeson Lectures in Biblical Preaching

Dr. R. Wade Paschal
Director of the Beeson Center; Ph.D in New Testament from Cambridge, Executive Pastor, First United Methodist Church, Tulsa, OK, 1982-1991

Dr. David Seamands
First Beeson Professor of Biblical Preaching; Dean of the Chapel

BEESON SENIOR FELLOWS (1991-1992)

Dr. Donald English
General Home Secretary, British Methodist Church; President, World Methodist Council, Beeson Senior Fellow and inaugural lecturer for Beeson Lectures on Biblical Preaching, February 27, 1992

Gen. Eva Burrows
International Commander for The Salvation Army, Beeson Senior Fellow in Biblical Preaching, Speaker at Ministers' Conference, February 3-6, 1992

Dr. Maxie Dunnam
Senior Pastor, Christ United Methodist Church, Memphis, TN; General Director of World Evangelism, World Methodist Council, Beeson Senior Fellow and Chair of the Clergy Council for the Beeson Center program

PLAN NOW TO PARTICIPATE in the developing opportunities in biblical preaching and pastoral leadership at Asbury. To receive future mailings, write Dr. R. Wade Paschal, Director of the Beeson Center, Asbury Theological Seminary, 204 N. Lexington Avenue, Wilmore, KY 40390-1199, or call (606) 858-3581. We will be true to our trust.

Respectfully yours,

David L. McKenna

David L. McKenna, *President*

Financial stress on clergy families leads pastors to leave the ministry

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Clergy families are experiencing increasing financial stress and crises, sometimes leading to hankruptcy, United Methodist bishops were told recently.

Several reasons were given for the crises.

The Rev. Rohert Kohler, representing the Division of Ordained Ministry of the church's Board of Higher Education and Ministry, said that people entering the ministry, because of seminary and other indebtedness, are experiencing severe financial distress.

In one statewide study of people who had heen out of seminary five years, ahout a third had left the ministry—many for financial reasons, Mr. Kohler told the bishop's committee on pastoral concerns.

"Although the average student graduates from seminary with an educational deht load of $14,000, this does not take into account other indebtedness such as home, car, or furnishings," he said.

"It is not uncommon for a student with a deht load in excess of $25,000 to he assigned to an entry level church," he continued, calling the financial struggle a "significant hurden" for the recent seminary graduate.

Other pressures cited

Other reasons for financial crisis included increased pressures at mid-career for educational expenses for children, prohlems arising out of accidents or illness and general financial recession.

The recession was hlamed for spouses laid off and unemployed children moving hack home. Some churches are unable to pay salaries they once were able to pay.

Several hishops, including Bishop Ruehen P. Job (Iowa Area), said financial crises and hankruptcy sometimes occurs in clergy families with comfortable salaries who hecame "addicted to cultural patterns of consumerism" or "let their finances get out of control."

In response to the report, the Council of Bishops recommended that the Division of Ordained Ministry undertake a study of the prohlem and produce guidance materials for annual conference hoards of ordained ministry and cahinets which deal with these issues.

Also, the bishops urged that seminaries encourage doctoral candidates to conduct case studies which could guide church policy in the future.

Other actions

In other action, the Council of Bishops:

- Requested authorization from the 1992 General Conference for the council to continue—in cooperation with other groups—developing a proposal to reorganize the glohal structure of the United Methodist Church.

At present, the proposal calls for a General Conference that would include four regional conferences: North America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

Each of the regions would elect an equal numher of clergy and lay members to General Conference.

It is proposed that legislation for the regions would be conducted at the regional conferences. Delegates to the regional conferences would be elected hy annual conferences.

If General Conference approves the continuation of the study, the completed proposal will he submitted for action to the 1996 General Conference;

- Forwarded the report of a Commission for the Study of Ministry to the General Conference but asked for a delay on action until 1996 (see related article);
- Supported the Puerto Rico Annual Conference's request to General Conference for status as an autonomous Methodist denomination affiliated with the United Methodist Church.

Bishops laud Bush, Baker

Reporter staff special

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—In a letter to U.S. President George Bush, the United Methodist Council of Bishops recently commended the president and Secretary James Baker for their efforts to hring Middle Eastern antagonists to the negotiating table in Madrid.

"Your perseverance in the face of age-old hostilities and huge ohstacles is noted and greatly appreciated," the letter said. "We urge you to continue to use the good office of the United States in insisting on dialogue and negotiation."

The letter called on the president and the secretary to insist on hasic human rights for Palestinians as well as security for Israel as a nation.

Director Children's Ministry
Full-time. 5000 members. Creative, energetic, responsible person needed. Salary commensurate education/experience. Resume: First UMC, Drawer 1567, Shreveport, LA 71165-1567. (318) 424-7771.

Conference Treasurer/Director Of Administrative Services
Northern Illinois Conference seeking replacement for Treasurer retiring June 30, 1991. Job includes office manager and personnel director. Open to both lay and clergy. Computer experience helpful. Detailed job description sent on request. Resumes by December 31, 1991 to:
Jarvis Spreng, 1036 Douglas Ave. Naperville, IL 60540

Interfaith drug effort eyes 'grassroots'

Task force study cites churches for innovative leadership against drug abuse

Religious News Service

NEW YORK—An interfaith effort to come up with alternatives to the U.S. government's "war on drugs" is focusing on grassroots initiatives.

Known as Causes and Cures, the coalition of church and community leaders recently held a national satellite teleconference.

Originating at Marble Collegiate Church, the symposium featured input from people in 170 communities to critique the U.S. government's existing strategy against drugs, suggest changes and push for making the issue an important part of the 1992 presidential campaign.

'Churches feel effect'

"The churches are feeling the effects of the drug crisis more and more," said the Rev. James Forbes, pastor of Riverside Church on Manhattan's Upper West Side, in a text prepared for delivery at the teleconference.

Dr. Forbes, a coalition member, said, "Our nation bas failed . . . by giving them little more than simplistic slogans to pass on, ratber than a variety of options they can recommend for intervention and treatment."

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, declared in her advance text that "drug use is now widespread throughout all strata and races in our society. Recent data show that four out of five users of illegal drugs are white, and most have a yearly income of above $50,000."

Task force study

Task forces established by a network of 20 religious organizations has been working during the past year to examine causes of drug abuse and drug dealing, the role of foreign policy and covert operations in international drug trafficking, causes of increased production in source countries, the role that white-collar crime plays in the drug trade, criminal justice and law enforcement, and model programs.

In remarks prepared for the symposium, Archdeacon Michael S. Kendall of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, said, "The research shows that elements of the U.S. government have supported and protected drug lords in Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia and Latin America in exchange for their support in covert wars and other campaigns of low-intensity conflict. This has got to stop if we are going to prevent future epidemics."

According to an overview of task force reports, the Bush administration's programs "have not reduced the profitability of the drug trade, stemmed the flow of drugs to our streets or cured the high level of addiction nationwide."

One source of hope "is tbe hard work of religious and community activists across the country," the overview said.

'Innovative programs'

"Despite lack of funds, communities have been resilient and innovative in addressing local drug problems," the report continued.

"They have transformed crack houses into youth centers and used community-based law enforcement methods to take back their streets.

"They have organized after-school programs, mentor programs and other drug-prevention measures. They have provided real leadership where policy-makers have provided little."

One such program has been the United Methodist Bishops' Initiative Against Drugs and Violence. Local congregations set up "saving stations" where youths and their families could learn techniques for resisting drug abuse.

A Pan-Methodist coalition including United Methodists and three historically black denominations—African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal—recently sponsored a four-day youth convocation against drugs in Atlanta.

Youths at the convocation convinced former President Jimmy Carter to pledge his support for advocating greater governmental effort against drug abuse.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

WCC head visits South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—The Rev. Peter Storey (left,) bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, introduces the Rev. Emilio Castro, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, to a group of youngsters. Dr. Castro, a Uruguayan Methodist, visited South Africa recently on the first WCC tour of the country in 30 years. The WCC leaders had been banned from South Africa by its government for their stand against the country's system of racial separation known as apartheid. During their 12-day visit, WCC representatives visited with government, civil rights and church leaders.

Review

Bill Moyers, Elie Wiesel 'face evil' on PBS

By THOMAS W. GOODHUE

Bill Moyers, a Baptist-preacher-turned-television-journalist, has devoted nearly all of his recent programs for the Public Broadcasting System to some aspect of faith. His extended discussions offer some of the most thoughtful explorations of the issues of our time which are available anywbere.

In "Facing Evil with Elie Wiesel," which airs Nov. 27 on PBS (check local listings), Mr. Moyers tackles topics we usually avoid as be interviews Elie Wiesel, a noted author who is also a Holocaust survivor, human rights activist and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mr. Moyers asked Mr. Wiesel tough questions about the nature of hate, why hate is often rooted in religion, and how one can believe in God after Auschwitz.

As much as this reviewer respects Mr. Wiesel as a novelist, I had some difficulty imagining him as a television personality. I wondered if even Mr. Moyers, a distinguished broadcaster might have finally taken on a topic beyond his abilities.

Elie Wiesel
. . . discusses hatred

Mr. Moyers begins, though, with a interesting observation:

At several conferences on "The Anatomy of Hate" which Mr. Wiesel has sponsored in the United States, Israel, and Norway that many participants seemed to avoid discussing hate itself.

Not only are scholars more comfortable talking about war, bigotry, or anger than hatred, Mr. Wiesel relies, those who hate do not like to use that word to describe what they do or feel. Even the Nazis who slaughtered most of bis family, he says, claimed to be killing Jews for a reason other than hatred.

With that simple insight, I was drawn into their discussion.

As a witness to the Holocaust, Mr. Wiesel acknowledges his lasting anger toward the Nazis, toward anti-Semites among the other prisoners, and toward the Allies who did nothing to stop the massacre in the death camps. This anger might easily have turned into batred, but by returning to religious studies after World War II, he says, he was spared hatred.

Mr. Wiesel is thankful for this, he explains, because he has learned that hate "is not only destructive, but also self-destructive." He says of the Nazis, "They wanted to dehumanize their victims, and in so doing they dehumanized themselves."

"Moyers/Facing Evil with Elie Wiesel" is an engaging examination of human sin and brokenness and one which holds out hope for preserving the memory and traditions which others seek to destroy. Far from being depressing, it is eye-opening and even inspiring.

Mr. Goodhue, of Island Park, N.Y., frequently reviews films and television for the Reporter.

Intruders beat nuns, threaten to kill them

By SHELLEY EMLING
Religious News Service

GUATEMALA CITY—Dominican nuns living in a convent bere have been beaten and threatened with death on two separate occasions recently by masked, unidentified, armed men who ransacked and robbed the convent.

According to a statement released by the nuns, several men broke into the home and stole $300 while the nine nuns who live at the convent attended church services. A handwritten note was found threatening Sister Alba Mendez and another nun with death, the statement said.

Ms. Mendez is vice president of the Religious Conference of Guatemala, known by its Spanish acronym CONFREGUA. The conference is composed of churches that aid victims of the country's ongoing civil war.

The president of CONFREGUA, Marcelino Garcia, planned to investigate the death threats and robberies. The most recent robbery was the second such incident involving men dressed in black. One of the nuns was injured after being beaten in a bathroom. Various objects and some money were stolen.

Several nuns called the police during the incident, but tbey failed to show up for more tban an hour, claiming they had lacked electricity at the police station, according to the nun's statement.

No arrests have been made, and police say they are not sure whether the same men were responsible for both incidents.

The nuns have been living at tbe convent for 14 years and have never experienced problems before.

History of Hymns

Writer gives thanks to God amid calamities

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms,
Hath blest us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

In the midst of the famine, pestilence, and destruction of the Thirty Years' War, Martin Rinkart wrote these lines in 1636. For some time he was the only minister in the walled city of Eilenburg in Saxony. Many people in the city were casualties of the war or victims of sickness or famine.

During the great pestilence of 1637, Rinkart ministered to the people of the city and conducted 4,500 burial services—sometimes as many as 40 or 50 a day. One of them was for his wife.

A man of frail physique but heroic character, Rinkart loved and faithfully served the people of his congregation and community from 1617 until his death in 1649.

The sturdy Lutheran faith of this dedicated minister is reflected in the lines of the hymn. The first stanza is an expression of thanksgiving for the blessings of God. The second is a petition for God's care and keeping, and the final stanza is a doxology, praising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The German text was translated into English by Catherine Winkworth, distinguished English linguist, in 1858. In four decades it became well known in England and was sung at the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Queen Victoria in 1897.

The music we use in singing Rinkart's hymn was composed in 1647 by Jobann Cruger. A dedicated and highly respected musician, Cruger served as music director at the Lutheran Cathedral of St. Nicbolas in Berlin for 40 years.

Cruger's collection of German chorale tunes, published in 1644, included many of his own compositions and was outstanding among similar collections produced in Germany in the seventeentb century.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"Am I a Soldier of the Cross"

PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHRIDGE UMC

Nightblooming Jazzmen lead California 'saints'

NORTHRIDGE, Calif.—The Nightblooming Jazzmen (and a "jazz woman") lead the Northridge (Calif.) United Methodist congregation out of their old sanctuary to the door of their new $2 million sanctuary on All Saints Sunday. The Dixieland band is a yearly event for the church's standing-room-only All Saints Day celebration.

Poem

Prayer Changes Us

We pray,
placing our requests
before God,
Asking for change:
for aid and comfort,
for answers or improvements.

Our prayers
don't change God
nor God's will or love.
Instead, inexplicably,
through our acts of prayer
God changes us.

Why, then, do we
often find prayer so hard?
—DOROTHY MERCER

Dear Deborah

Give the 'widow's mite'

Dear Deborah:

Regarding the letter from "A widow on a fixed income:"

Everyone is familiar with "a widow's mite," tbe contribution given by the poor woman in Mark 12:41-44.

The church must fund missions or it will die. Every member has a responsibility to contribute regardless of the amount.

My 80-year-old mother, widowed and on a fixed income, gives a few dollars a week. She knows her blessings far exceed her giving. Staying on the roll because of past performance is not the issue.

—Carlton

Dear Carlton:

Your name is changed but this is your letter just as you wrote it.

No one would argue the point you make. Certainly the mission of the church has to be supported.

As I see it, the question is whether a church that uses staying on the roll as a threat in order to get money is already dying.

We have to take care of our own while doing all we can to reach out to others and support efforts for evangelism and justice all around the world. It is not a case of one or the other. Thanks for writing.

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Pittsburgh lets religious groups meet in schools

Religious News Service

The Pittsburgh Board of Public Education has voted to allow religious activities in its schools outside class hours in response to an order by a federal district judge.

The judge's order, issued in July, was based on an appeal from Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., a Christian organization that had been allowed to operate a summer program in the city's public scbools for more than 20 years.

This year the school board notified the group that it would not be allowed to use school facilities because of the religious content of the programs. The board said it had not been aware of the religious aspects of the programs.

The revocation. . . unconstitutionally restricted free speech.

which violated a 1979 policy prohibiting the use of public schools for "religious or sectarian purposes."

In his order, Judge William L. Standish said the board's revocation of the permits to the Christian group unconstitutionally restricted free speech. He also noted that public schools in Pittsburgh have been used by Christian, Jewish and Muslim groups.

Under the board's new policy, all non-profit groups will be permitted to use school facilities at least once a week at no charge.

CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

Shreveport, Louisiana

"ONE OF THE BEST BUYS" NEW YORK TIMES | NOVEMBER 22, 1991 | "ONE OF THE NATION'S BEST COLLEGES" U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

DR. KENNETH L. SCHWAB

"Centenary provides a framework of values"

Brown Memorial Chapel was filled to capacity for President's Convocation at Centenary College Thursday, September 12, when Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab was welcomed as the College's 34th President.

Bishop William Oden and members of the Cabinet were honored guests, and participated in the academic procession along with members of the Freshmen Class, and faculty and seniors who marched in traditional, academic regalia.

Joined by his wife, Patricia, Dr. Schwab thanked the entire Centenary Family for their gracious reception and warm hospitality. Dr. Schwab assumed the duties of President August 7, and his family – wife Patricia, and sons Carlton and Christopher – joined him in early September. Their oldest son, Kempten, is a sophomore at the University of South Carolina.

Dr. Schwab's address was entitled "Centenary College: Home of Ideas, Ideas of Home," excerpts of which follow.

"When I first arrived on campus, I was moved by the harmony of life here, by the easy rapport between students and staff... The days are now turning into welcome weeks that I have spent on Centenary's campus, and I have not even once felt that I was coming to an unfamiliar place... Rather, I felt as if I were returning to a place I knew, a place that knew me. I felt that I was returning home...

"I would like to promote this idea of home as an ideal for us to embrace and foster throughout the community of our campus. After all, home is where we are loved without hesitation and appreciated without qualification. It is where we first become ourselves, and where we become our best selves. It is where we are strengthened through commonality at the same time that we are esteemed for our individuality. Home provides us with a springboard for initiative as well as a sanctuary for retreat. Home is mindful of its own faith and heritage, and yet must adapt daily to the shifting demands of the world of which it is an integral part...

"For all the students, faculty and staff at Centenary comprise a family; one which recognizes the College as more than an incidental collection of buildings and persons, but as a community of individuals who are committed both to their success and to the success of their colleagues and classmates. 'Home' at Centenary is more than a place; it is a state of mind and a state for the mind...

"We can build on the strength of family which the students bring with them to the campus, and which they will carry with them when they leave. The community of liberal arts colleges, of which Centenary is a leader in innovation, provides a framework of values for our students which are not available to them in a typical university setting.

"As we go forth into this new year at Centenary, I'd like for us to keep this ideal of home in our hearts and use it as a touchstone – to guide our individual ambitions and to insure our awareness of the needs of those around us.

"In Ayn Rand's well known novel on architecture and altruism, *The Fountainhead*, she asserts that "A great building is...a condensation of the spirit of a people." As long as we are building a home, we can trust that we are building a great college at the same time. I am proud and honored to be a part of the Centenary family and i look forward to many rich years of association with each of you. Thank you."

President's Convocation

Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab, appointed by the Board of Trustees in August to become Centenary's 34th President, visits with members of the Freshman Class following President's Convocation. The new students include (left to right) Kelly McCrary of Bossier City, Lora Moser of Bossier City, and Mary Austin of Benton.

CAMPUS VISITS

High school juniors and seniors are invited to visit Centenary during special Campus Visit Days or anytime during the year.

Preview Days
December 6, 1991
January 19-20, 1992

Scholarship Day
(by invitation only)
Friday, February 21, 1992

Spring Fling
Friday, April 10, 1992

Individual visits by appointment.
For more information call 318-869-5131 or 1-800-234-4448.

MINISTERIAL FELLOWS TO STUDY ON CAMPUS

Three Ministerial Fellows have been selected for study at Centenary during the 1991-92 academic year. They are the Rev. Steven J. Porter, Ringgold-Castor Charge; the Rev. Arnold Verstal Brown, St. James-Round Grove Charge, and the Rev. William E. Nolan, Nolley-Belah.

The Fellows will spend one week on campus in the fall researching their projects with the help of Centenary faculty and library staff. They will return for one week during the spring semester to work with their academic advisers toward the completion of their projects.

The Rev. Porter will do research in the area of Baptism and Bible-based psychology and evangelism. The Rev. Brown will research the role of the pastor of counselor and the improvement of counseling techniques in the local church. He will also study the topic of the pastor as administrator. The Rev. Nolan will explore images in worship: iconology, iconolatry, iconomachy, and iconographics. He will augment his research with documentary and the use of photography.

Copies of the completed projects will become part of the permanent collection of the United Methodist Archives in the Sam P. Peters Research Center at Centenary.

'A NICKEL MORE'

By Dick Anders
Director of Church Relations

I've grown up hearing the catch phrase that "It only costs a nickel more to go first class." I've also grown up knowing that "It ain't so." Perhaps in the early 1980s a trail-worn, dusty cowboy could get an upgrade board and bath for a nickel more... but those days are long past.

For the second year in a row, Centenary takes pride in being listed in *Money Magazine* as one of the nation's best buys in higher education. We've moved from 26th to 22nd in ranking in just one year. Considerations for this ranking by the magazine are quality of students, faculty, facilities, and costs.

Obviously when you are looking at a high quality, private, church-related liberal arts college, you're talking about a lot of nickels.

This past year alone we've dedicated and opened two new buildings on our campus, including one that houses the Louisiana United Methodist Archives wing. Several new scholarships have been established by churches, Methodist friends, and corporations. The average ACT score of our freshman class is 24, well above the national average of 17. Most students also have a 3.0 grade point average or better.

Centenary College is indeed fortunate to have the strong support of the Louisiana Conference, the clergy, and laypeople across the State of Louisiana and beyond in helping us provide the resources that place us in the ranks of large universities such as Rice and the University of Texas-Austin. Being Number 22 in the top 100 means we're getting every nickel's worth!

Dick Anders
Director of Church Relations

With the continued support that we have received, and perhaps a few more "nickels" from our churches who support us through apportionments, Centenary College will remain a top, nationally ranked college displaying pride in our co-ministry with the United Methodist Church, and appropriately the Louisiana Conference.

BOLD NEW PLAN ADDS EXTRA FACETS TO CENTENARY LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

Centenary College will be dramatically different a year from today because of the work of a team of faculty, students, trustees and staff members. Their proposal – The Centenary Plan – will shape and direct the College so that it will be even more exciting and meaningful for future generations.

Enthusiastically approved by the faculty, Phase I of The Centenary Plan includes the following.

Community Service

All students will be involved in at least one approved community service project over their four years. There will be a menu of options from which to choose. Some will be team projects, and others will be individual assignments. Students will have a mentor and a pre-established set of expectations.

"The College believes the students have an obligation to give back to society, and in so doing they improve themselves," said Dr. Barrie Richardson, chairman of the Centenary Plan Task Force. "Some students will want to continue their volunteer work with projects such as our CLEAR tutoring program or with the LightHouse for minorities. We also envision our students working with urban renewal in Chicago or on a mission in Guatemala," Dr. Richardson said. "Voluntarism is both a fine American tradition and a central tenet in the mission of the Methodist Church. A liberal arts college with Methodist roots is in an ideal position to teach its students habits of service and help them prepare for lives of responsible citizenship."

Intercultural Experience

All students who graduate from Centenary College will have at least one experience in living and learning in a different culture. This intercultural experience may take place in the May term, summer, or during the academic year. Some of them will not cost any more than the cost of our existing off-campus Modules.

"Centenary believes it is very important to live and learn in a culture other than our own," Dr. Richardson said. "For some that will be the London School of Economics or the Sorbonne. For others it may be traveling with their own professor to an Amish Community in Pennsylvania or living and studying in the Virgin islands.

Career Exploration

All students in their sophomore year will be involved in an assessment program which will help guide their career decisions. Students who desire it will have an opportunity to do an internship in their junior or senior years.

"We believe that meaningful work is a significant part of life," Dr. Richardson said, "and it is affirming that a liberal arts education can prepare students for a variety of careers. All of our students will have counseling," he said, "and an opportunity to explore many doors which they otherwise might have thought closed. Each student will have the opportunity to do an internship, and we will call on alumni all over the world to help us give practical experience to our students."

"I think this is something that is right to do," said Rosemary Seidler, Professor of Chemistry. "At best, students will benefit from the plan; at worst, it cannot hurt them. I love that they will step out of our parochial campus. It will help them know themselves. Ultimately, it will help a person know his own strengths and weaknesses and to go forward."

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LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor

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True Thanksgiving

William B. Oden

One of the medieval saints said that all prayer is ultimately praise and thanksgiving.

Swallow hard as you think about your year and meditate on this idea.

Yes, there have been heartaches and hurts; there are anxieties and uncertainties; some hopes have faded and at times life seems flat and tasteless.

We would like some pity and extra understanding. We are not readily in the mood to celebrate Thanksgiving. It simply isn't the right time.

But remember the words of our saint. All prayer is ultimately praise and thanksgiving. All petitions, intercessions, cries of pain hurt, and fear; all prayers ultimately turn into thanksgiving to God for life, divine love, cosmic grace.

Let this he a time of true thanksgiving for all that is through the God who sustains us in Jesus Christ!

William B. Oden

Christmas Greetings All Year Long: The Africa University Drive

The first commercial Christmas card was designed by artist John Callcott Horsley at the suggestion of Sir Henry Cole, according to Dr. Webb Garrison, author of *A Treasury of Christmas Stories.* The card, sent through the "penny post," replaced the calling cards hand delivered at Christmas by proper eighteenth-century English gentlemen. Its purpose was to spread Christmas greetings to a greater number of people.

The cards were not successful because the design incorporated libation as part of the holiday scene — and thus offended the followers of the Temperance Movement popular in 1843, the year of their creation. (How times have changed!) Nevertheless, the idea of sending greetings at Christmas remained strong.

Christmas cards became popular in this country in the 1880s when German-born Louis Prang sold reproduced works of art. Later the Gibson Art Company produced original designs of its own. From there on, illustrated messages of Christmas joy became an important part of the holiday spirit.

This year, United Methodists can add another dimension to this form of Christmas cheer by buying Christmas cards that continue to send Christian love and care after the season is over.

The new African Drummer Boy Commemorative Christmas Card.

The Africa University Library Fund project offers Christmas cards for sale along with commemorative NUSV Bibles and Hymnals. A special new "African Drummer Boy" Christmas Card has been added to the four offered last year.

The leaders of the Fund Drive also ask that you take the additional step of organizing a campaign in your church for these commemorative items.

To order, contact the Cokesbury Service Center; 201 Eighth Avenue South; P. O. Box 801; Nashville, TN 37202-0801; 1-88-672-1769.

Another Alternative Greeting: Society of St. Andrews Card

The Society of St. Andrew will send an alternative Christmas Card to anyone you would like to honor this Christmas. They are requesting that the minimum gift per honoree be $10.00. For gifts of $20.00 or more per honoree, they will also send the honoree a gift of their lenten meditations book, **Gleanings,** which includes 40 hunger meditations for the 40 days of Lent. The gifts you send will be used by the hunger ministries of the Society of St. Andrew to provide good nutritious produce to those who are hungry for about one cent per serving. Gifts should be sent prior to December 10 to insure delivery by December 25.

Orders should be sent to Society of St. Andrew, P. O. Box 329, Big Island, VA 24526 by December 10th.

Dec. Conf. Calendar

4	Conference-wide Prayer Service, sponsored by Louisiana Conference AIDS Task Force
5-8	Cursillo No. 26, Tall Timbers
5-8	United Methodist Women New Officer Training Event, New York City
10-11	Cabinet Meeting, Baton Rouge, 1:30 p.m. on 10th
22	Children's Homes' Offering

Advent

Building in Faith: Newman United Methodist Church

When Interstate 49 was routed through the location of Newman United Methodist Church in Alexandria, the congregation mobilized to rebuild.

They found a perfect location "amid sunny skies overlooking five acres of land nestled in a middle-class community characterized by meticulously-manicured lawns," according to the Rev. Isiah M. Lee, Jr., Newman's pastor.

With lots of prayers, meetings and enthusiasm, coupled with unbounded faith, they designed a 600-seat sanctuary, an administrative wing and a fellowship hall surrounded by classrooms and other facilities. Plans were to build the complex in two phases.

The congregation also planned space for a future television/video control room for a T.V. ministry, a computer room, a mini-chapel and outreach offices. Funding was secured through the help of generous donors, including interested non-Methodists who "knew that the community would benefit from this project." Ground Breaking Ceremonies were held on December 2, 1990, with the Alexandria Mayor Ned Randolph, City Councilman Bob Lawrence, District Superintendent Richard Hoffpauir and Conference Lay Leader Paul White among the invited guests.

A year later, the project is "90 percent complete," said Mr. Lee. Grateful as the church members are for the kind and free use of the Winnfield Funeral Home where they have been meeting courtesy of Mr. Ben Johnson, they are looking forward to moving into the completed sanctuary in January.

The enthusiasm of the congregation remains high. Their vision of renewal extends past the church's building program into the community at large. Mr. Lee says that Newman's parishioners are eager to "embrace those who are in need and hurting and come into the church for help."

Ground-Breaking Ceremony at Newman. Pictured above from left: Attorney J. E. Hines, Jr.; Councilman Bob Lawrence; Mayor Ned Randolph; District Superintendent Richard Hoffpauir; Pastor Isiah M. Lee, Jr.; Chairman of the Board of Trustees Julius Mines; Chairman of Building Committee Jeffrey Washington; Vice-Chairwoman Doris Perry.

Evangelism is a primary focus for the 276-member group. Mr. Lee speaks excitedly about Newman's planned outreach program and the potential it holds to have "a thriving, predominately ethnic congregation in that area of the Conference." Using the example of the work of one of United Methodism's great ministers, the Rev. Zan Holmes, Jr., as his model, Mr. Lee concludes that the opportunity for that kind of mission and success is readily available in Louisiana. Newman, he predicts, will play a significant part in it.

'Signs' and Wonders

St. Luke's UMC in Baton Rouge has adopted a novel approach to spread their good news. In an effort to make the community more aware of the church, yard signs were purchased and donated by a church family for members to place in yards. St. Luke members Mr. and Mrs. Robert Davis (above) stand by their sign. It says, "We are members of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 3791 Aletha Drive." Other signs read, "I am a member . . . We attend . . . I attend . . ." The Rev. Ken Bowman is pastor of the church.

Community Connections

St. Mark's UMC, Alexandria, celebrated its 88th anniversary on September 22nd. The Rev. James Graham was the guest minister. The Rev. Samuel Butler is St. Mark's pastor.

The New Orleans District Board of Laity hosted a reception for Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab, the new president of Centenary College, on November 23rd. The reception took place at 3:00 p.m. at St. Matthew's UMC in Metairie. Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook, president of Dillard University introduced Dr. Schwab. A free-will offering was received for the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund. Mr. William Koonce is New Orleans' District Lay Leader.

Centenary College leaders announced that the Fulfill the Vision Campaign exceeded the fund-raising goal of $21.5 million. Under the leadership of former president Donald Webb, a total of $21,776,340 was contributed to Centenary during the three-year Campaign by alumni, trustees, faculty, friends, parents and staff. Dr. Kenneth J. Schwab, current president, said: "This is a real demonstration of love for this college."

Centenary College alumni G. W. James of Ruston and Harvey Broyles of Shreveport served as overall chairmen of the Campaign.

Bethany UMC in New Orleans celebrated its 34th anniversary October 25th-27th. Special events included a soul-stirring Mini-Musical Concert by Bethany's pastor, the Rev. Kenneth M. Fisher, and Mr. Ronald P. Thomas, layman; a nationally-acclaimed artist, Dr. E. Jack Jordan, who created art pieces to music and narration; and guest-speaker, the Rev. Roger D. Lathan, former pastor of Bethany and current Associate Director of the Conference Council on Ministries. Mr. George Robertson was Anniversary Chairperson.

The Methodist Hospital's Psychiatric Pavilion and Eastbank Psychotherapy Associates are sponsoring a community education workshop entitled "Healing the Hole in your Soul" on December 5th. The workshop will be held at Metairie Baptist Church, 401 Codifer Blvd. Speakers will be the Rev. William Thiele, a clinically-trained Pastoral Counselor, and Mr. Bill Bischoff, a Board-Certified Social Worker.

Registration is required for the workshop. Please call Margaret at (504) 888-2066 to reserve a seat or obtain additional information.

St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Shreveport reported that their "Pumpkin Patch" profits this year were $5,074 for mission projects in their church. That was double the amount from the year before.

Our United Methodist Family

Tribute to John developed in "The Patch"

Mrs. Helen Koelemay, a licensed horticulturist, has developed a hybrid, pink-gold blended day lily named for her husband, John. A "Tribute to John" was developed with the Rev. John Koelemay's help in setting up "The Patch," her name for the nursery where she puts her gardening skills to work. Both the Koelemays have retired from the active parish ministry and live in Many.

Ms. Laura Stuart, the daughter of John and Linda Stuart, was the first recipient of the Bunkie Scholarship Fund given through the David Haas Memorial United Methodist Church. The Fund was started with memorials given in loving memory of Mrs. F. G. Ormsby. Ms. Stuart is pursuing graduate work in psychology after graduating from the Church Careers program at Centenary College. Pictured from left are Mr. Jack Cochran, Ms. Stuart and Mrs. Winona Cochran. The Cochrans are relatives of Mrs. Ormsby. The Rev. Charles L. Floyd, Jr., is pastor of the Church.

Woman of Achievement is a rocker and hugger

The Rev. Deborah Drash was recently honored as one of the Baton Rouge Area YMCA's 1991 Women of Achievement. Ms. Drash works as chaplain and pastoral counselor for Capitol Hospice of Baton Rouge. She helped to found "Rockers and Huggers," a volunteer pediatric care outreach for infants and children with AIDS. In addition, Ms. Drash works with a bereavement ministry program for families with seriously-ill members.

Mr. Jonathan Steele, a resident of MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services, received that organization's highest award for academic excellence this past summer. Mr. Steele recently completed the eighth grade at Oaklawn Junior High School. From left: Ms. Jayne Sommer, program director; Mr. Jonathan Steele; and Mr. G. J. Bridges, MacDonell president.

United Methodist pastor named a "giraffe"

The Rev. Jim Wilson, chaplain of the Northeast University Campus Ministry, was one of eight "giraffes" honored in October in Ouachita Parish. "Giraffes" are men and women who are willing to "stick their necks out for the common good." The Junior League of Monroe, sponsor of the award, cited Mr. Wilson for his willingness to speak out over the years in seeking better relationships among people of all races. He is also involved with patients who have AIDS and in presenting educational programs on the disease.

Editorial

Values: Surviving the good times

A recent survey yielded good news that needs to be made better.

According to two nationwide studies sponsored by the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., American adults are moving away from values rooted in materialism and toward greater concern for others, particularly family members.

The study compared findings of a survey taken this fall to a similar survey taken in 1989. Following are some noteworthy results:

■ "Having nice things" as a very important value **decreased** from 36 percent to 26 percent.

■ "Leaving the world to the next generation in better shape" as a very important value **increased** from 29 percent to 38 percent.

■ "Respecting one's parents" and "respecting one's children" as very important values **increased** 9 percentage points each.

■ Those who believe that "family is the place where most basic values are instilled" **increased** from 62 percent to 84 percent.

We are cautiously encouraged by such findings.

The encouraging news is that, on the surface, they show movement toward values consistent with biblical teachings. These are teachings that de-emphasize possessions and promote concern for one's family and for others.

But why the apparent shift in values? A spokesperson for the survey offered a common sense explanation: Financial pressures resulting from a weak economy have prompted widespread emphasis on frugality and "staying close to home."

Consequently, we believe a caution is in order about inferring that our society is undergoing a significant "values shift":

As economic factors improve, experience suggests that values once again will change—most likely away from frugality and concern for others and toward increased valuing of "things" and "self-fulfillment."

As Christians, we should be alert for opportunities posed by people's willingness to do the right thing, albeit for reasons of expedience.

Specifically, we should affirm and nurture the willingness to de-emphasize material things and to emphasize concern for family and others.

In doing so, however, we should both practice and encourage prayerful self-examination of motivations. Might we be espousing new values merely as a self-serving expedient or, perhaps, as a "bargaining chip" to gain God's help in hard times?

Or, are we honestly seeking to root our lives in the wisdom and will of God at all times?

If the former, our new "values" are likely to last only as long as the hard times that spawned them.

If the latter, we're promised that God will help us make positive changes in our moral and spiritual lives that will sustain us in both hard times and good (Luke 11:9-13).

FaithLine

How do you observe Advent?

Lighting an Advent wreath is a traditional way for Christians to observe the four Sundays preceding Christmas.

How does your family and/or congregation observe the Advent season? Prizes will be awarded for the five responses judged by the Reporter's editorial staff to be the most creative.

Respond by calling the FaithLine answering machine (214-630-6499) by midnight, Dec. 5.

My Witness

Joy's hand amid tragedy

By CLAYTON OLIPHINT

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. The Rev. Clayton Oliphint is pastor of First United Methodist Church in The Colony, Texas (North Texas Annual Conference).

It was time for the annual Christmas music program at the church, but I did not feel like lifting my voice in praise.

I wondered what I was doing singing in the choir anyway. I don't have a great voice, but it was a church activity in which my wife and I could participate together. It was fun, but on this evening, I was not in the mood to sing because of what had happened two days before.

On the last day of school before the holidays, a young fifth grader named Brian had been hit by a car and killed on his way to school. Along with other ministers and counselors, I was called to the school to be with the children when they received the news.

The school gym was set up for a big Christmas party, but the mood in the room was anything but festive. The children cried and talked about their friend.

They had been on the mountain top just moments before as they anticipated the Christmas holidays. Now they found themselves in the depths of despair. What had started out to be a joyous day was now a day of deep sorrow and loss.

This tragic event weighed heavily on my mind as we took our seats next to the children's choir for the program. As we sang our first few songs, I found myself only going through the motions.

The children began their portion of the program. Toward the end of the program, the lights were dimmed as the children sang "Silent Night." They asked the congregation to stand and sing also.

As I stood and sang with the choir, I felt a little hand reach up and take my hand. I looked down into the face of Joy Cravens, a 6-year-old with thick glasses and several missing teeth. She was singing and smiling up at me.

My heart, full of the sadness of the previous days, was suddenly filled with a joy I could not explain. In the middle of "Silent Night," Joy reached up and took hold of my hand.

As I pondered that, I realized that's exactly what God did for a tired and sad world in the middle of a silent night long ago.

Joy is a divine gift which is present even in the midst of sadness and grief. Into the midst of people who were hurting, God sent the eternal gift of joy, in the form of a tiny babe in Bethlehem named Jesus Christ.

Letters to the Editor

Let's confine Christmas gift giving to children

Christians complain about Christmas being too commercialized. But there is a simple way they can remedy this: discontinue gift giving and swapping between adults and use the money to help those in need, especially relatives and people in the community.

The idea of Christmas gift giving came from the Wise Men bringing gifts to the infant Jesus. But the Wise Men, who of course were adults, did not bring gifts to Mary and Joseph, who also were adults.

This is the example to follow: gifts at Christmas for children only, and this in moderation.

Certainly Christmas will be a more relaxed and pleasant season for all who free themselves from the unnecessary trouble and expense associated with adult gift giving and swapping, and the true joy of Christmas is sure to glow more brightly, which is to celebrate Christ's birthday.

Ministers and other church leaders should take the lead in this devout movement.

T. J. Campbell
Smyrna, Georgia

Tithe our estates

Christians should tithe, that is, give at least 10 percent of our net income to the church and worthy charities.

But why limit it to earnings while we live? Why not tithe our estates by bequeathing 10 percent to the church?

Just imagine the millions of dollars available for subsidizing or endowing vital programs, making buildings handicap accessible, reaching out in mission, supporting colleges and undergirding retirement homes.

Nine-tenths of an estate is enough to bequeath to one's family and friends. Surely the tenth properly belongs to worthy institutions that have contributed so much to all of our lives.

I hope this suggestion will be widely circulated and promoted throughout the church.

Harold R. Hodgson
Rumford, Rhode Island

Give us a break!

I am writing in reference to the Nov. 8 "Here I Stand" column headlined, "Please don't get personal during communion" by David Paul.

Come on, give us a break!

Communication from minister to supplicant during communion is really not that big a deal, is it? Does it not remind us of the significance of the sacrifice that Christ made for us and his statements, "This is my body which is given for you . . . , and "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20)?

For me, this brief statement by my pastor is not crass, is not disruptive, and certainly is never "blurted out" by him. It does add greater solemnity and meaning to the ordinance and emphasizes the magnitude of the Savior's sacrifice.

Ralph H. Walton, Jr.
Grandbury, Texas

Is tradition threatened?

In the Oct. 25 article headlined, "Proposed worship book clears discipleship," I was concerned when I read about the options for God language. I object to a prayer addressing God as Mother.

Concerned Women of America's October issue included an interesting article entitled, "Goddess Worship created in the image of Feminism." Among other things, the article stated that "Feminists across the nation searching for spiritual sustenance for their political movement have turned God into a woman."

Could this be happening to United Methodists right now? Could it be that the Judeo-Christian tradition and belief that has long been held is being replaced by new words and terms so that before too long it would not resemble the Judeo-Christian faith of the past?

Daun Metz
Forrest, Illinois

Mission society praised

This week I received yet another unexpected donation from a congregation of United Methodists whom I met through the unofficial Mission for United Methodists.

During the four years we have known each other, this congregation has contributed thousands of dollars to our ministry to the homeless. The note enclosed with this latest check says more is yet to come.

The United Methodist "establishment" has nothing but criticism for the Mission Society. I have nothing but gratitude for them for they have been a blessing to us in many ways. Perhaps it is because we, too, are a grassroots ministry that developed without much enthusiasm from the "establishment."

Ken Powers
Nashville, Tennessee

Let's be consistent

I am glad John Brawthen recognizes a threat to academic freedom and the consequences that has for biblical scholarship (see UMR, Nov. 8). Let's be clear, however, about the source of that threat.

Dr. Cathy Davidson of Duke University filled three file folders with articles and newspaper clippings reporting instances of coercion in colleges and universities by liberals in order to enforce "political correctness." She discovered that only six cases were reported (and repeated over and over) by the national media.

It is still the case that the majority of cases of censorship consist of the right wing attempting to stifle open discussion on controversial issues. Perhaps the most prominent example of an attack on academic freedom is the assault of the fundamentalists on the moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Could that happen to us? The Good News movement and its allies have sent petitions to General Conference asking that our seminaries be "monitored" to make sure that Wesleyan doctrine is being taught. What happens to a professor who does not conform to the "true way"?

I find it ridiculously ironic that those who have been at the forefront of stifling free inquiry because of their conservative ideology are now crying out for academic freedom. If you believe in academic freedom, stand up for it in every case!

Jeff Fager
Owensboro, Kentucky

Upside down answers?

I appreciate the "Know your Bible" column but would like it more if the text and the answer appeared in the same issue.

Perhaps it could be printed upside down somewhere else on the page. Or perhaps the previous week's verse could be printed with its answer along with the current verse.

Sharon Morrow
Austin, Texas

Adoption affirmed

This is in response to the Oct. 18 "Here I Stand" column by Douglas Williams headlined, "Couples' pain of infertility deserves our compassion."

Thirty eight years ago, my wife and I thought that our infertility was the greatest possible tragedy and heartache. Now, after raising, from infancy, three of the most wonderful adopted children, who have given us a houseful of the greatest grandchildren, we know it to be God's finest blessing.

Since the world is so full of starving infants and children in Asia, Africa, South America, etc., I believe it to be more Christian to adopt, perhaps even for fertile couples.

If this does sound a little self-righteous coming from one forced to adopt, it is still true. Perhaps, the money spent on fertility clinics and the sympathy spent on the infertile would be better invested in the masses of starving children already born.

Robert L. Irwin
Wilmington, North Carolina

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* ___

(Last week's answer: Genesis 4:9)

Readings for week of Dec. 2

Monday: Psalms 25:1-5
Tuesday: Psalms 25:6-10
Wednesday: Jeremiah 33:14-16
Thursday: Luke 21:25-28
Friday: Luke 21:29-36
Saturday: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-10
Sunday: 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Here I Stand

We must become 'round nails' for next generation of Christians

By CAMILLA HEMPSTEAD

Recently at our church we completed the addition of a narthex to the front of the church. The construction required the first major alteration of the appearance of the building, built in 1874.

The nails that we had to remove during renovation were square, handmade (in all likelihood) by one of the original builders. These nails, crafted in love, made me think about the people who built this church.

Built church with love

The founders built this church out of love and with the hope that in this building, future generations like us could learn about God and spend time in the worship of God and in fellowship with others. For 117 years, people have gathered together weekly for worship and fellowship.

Now our generation has expanded these facilities to keep up with our congregation's growth over the years. We built this new addition with round nails, manufactured in a factory, but pounded in with the same love and hope that built this church over a century ago.

Add own touch

Someday a new generation will add their own touch to this place of worship—or will they?

Our church, like all churches today, needs to make sure the next generation has a place to worship. But that is not the only task for the church universal today. We have an obligation to make sure that the next generation has the desire to worship our Lord.

Those who provided us with our place of worship also provided our desire to worship. They are the "square nails" of our heritage. We are the "round nails," providing a place of worship and the desire to worship for the next generation.

Most of us in the church today look at our children's programs and feel satisfied. Most churches should be satisfied. Most programs for young children are very good. Yet somehow we lose the people between age 14 and 30.

It's difficult to plan for 14-to-30-year-old group. They are busy with school. They are in transition between home and school, between school and marriage, between school and jobs. It is easy for us to lose them in the shuffle.

They are the future

Yet they are the immediate future of our church. If we don't provide for them and teach them about the love of God, who will? If we don't provide for them, how can they provide for their children?

The "square nails" of our churches have planned and provided for our spiritual future. Now, as today's "round nails," we need to plan and provide for the future of our children and their children.

We must take our "round nails" and build a foundation that our future generations can stand upon as they learn to reach towards God. By building this foundation, we not only teach them how to live as people of God in today's world, but we also teach them how to build a foundation for their children.

Quaint and old-fashioned

Square nails. We see them as quaint and old-fashioned. Yet without them, our world would be falling down around us. Let's not let that happen to our future church.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Camilla Hempstead is a member of Mt. Vernon UMC, Champaign, Il. (Central Illinois Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What others are saying

"Unchurched people are drawn to the Christian life and are won to Christ by shepherding, compassionate pastors and by churches where they experience community and fellowship and belonging."

—The Rev. Kennon Callahan, church growth expert

* * *

"We have to prepare for the blessings God wants to give us. Many of us are not equipped to receive what we ask God for, because we don't move in the direction of the goals we have set. . ."

—The Rev. Renita Weems, Vanderbilt University.

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Faith watch

BISHOPS REMAIN SAFE: Political strife has resulted in an acute food shortage in southern Zaire, reports a United Methodist bishop there. In a Nov. 19 telephone call from Zambia, Bishop **Katembo Kainda** (Southern Zaire Conference) told officials of the church's General Board of Global Ministries that most stores in southern Zaire had been looted and burned, leaving a shortage of medicine and food. He said except for the restaurant and book store at United Methodist conference headquarters, church property or missionary housing were not damaged. Bishop Katembo also has been in radio contact with Bishop **Ngoy Kimba Wakadilo** (North Shaba Conference) who is safe but remains in seclusion. At Kamina Station, Bishop Wakadilo's office was damaged, but housing units, schools and churches were not.

FLORIDA UMS ON GUARD: United Methodist church buildings, with one possible exception, have escaped suspicious fires at 50 churches recently in Florida, but congregations have been warned to take extra precautions. Officials of the denomination's Florida Annual Conference said churches are being urged to have adequate insurance, prepare detailed inventories of equipment, take photos, clean up any rubbish that could be used to start a fire and be sure the property is securely locked when not in use. One suspect has been arrested, but authorities say they believe more than one person is involved. A suspicious fire earlier this year burned out Central United Methodist Church in Fort Myers, but that city is about 200 miles south of where most recent fires have been set.

OLDEST BISHOP BREAKS HIP: Retired United Methodist Bishop **Nolan B. Harmon**, 99, underwent surgery Nov. 10 after breaking a hip at his home in Atlanta. He had just returned from the Council of Bishops meeting at Lake Junaluska, N.C.

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Patriarch welcomed

NEW YORK—Children crowd around Russian Orthodox Patriarch Aleksy II as he prepares to enter a church during his recent 10-day visit to the United States—the first ever by the head of the largest Orthodox church in the world. Observers said his trip illustrates his popularity and potential ability to help solve religious and economic problems that are tearing his nation apart.

'Dumb kid' urges: 'pass values along'

Former governor tells United Methodists how adults helped him to succeed

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.—As a kid, he was called "dumb" and "a mess."

Now he's a university president and a former governor.

And Thomas H. Kean delivered this message recently to United Methodists:

Each one had somebody

"Each of you had somebody—a parent, teacher or friend—who cared about you, so you could become something or somebody.

"You have not done your job if you didn't have those values passed on to children, so they could pass them on to their children."

Dr. Kean, an Episcopalian, is president of United Methodist-related Drew University in Madison, N.J., and former governor of New Jersey.

Thomas H. Kean
. . . he made the grade

The theme for some 300 heads of United Methodist-related institutional ministries was "Embracing our Youth, Securing our Future."

The Nov. 16-21 meeting focused on the adolescent population and how church leaders can develop programs to meet the needs of that age group.

Every four years, the General Board of Global Ministries National Division convenes leaders of some 122 United Methodist-related institutions in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands for spiritual renewal and growth. These persons include community center executive directors and presidents of each center's governing board.

Also invited were annual conference presidents of United Methodist Women—key interpreters for these mission institutions in their respective regions.

In his keynote address, Dr. Kean said he seldom talks about his own childhood but he identifies with problems of today's youths.

As a young man, he said, he had a problem reading and suffered from a form of dyslexia.

'They said I was dumb'

"They said I was dumb because I reversed numbers and problems," he said. "Then I acquired a great stutter.

"There is nothing worse than to have a teacher you respect and like and have him ask you to answer a question, but you can't get it out.

"So because of these problems, I was called a mess."

Dr. Kean told the audience that he was aided by a teacher who would take him to his home and give him a place to study in solitude. That teacher—and other teachers—cared enough to want to help a child succeed, despite all his problems.

"I learned that there were ways to study by memorizing, but I did it only because I had help. If I didn't have the help of those individuals I wouldn't be here today," said Dr. Kean, who was ranked by "Newsweek" magazine in 1986 among the five most effective governors in the country.

Seek school reforms

Dr. Kean urged the national mission leaders not only to give their time to children and youth in their communities but to work for school reforms in every state.

Staff and volunteers of United Methodist mission institutions should also be the frontrunners for supporting more federal programs for youths, he said.

Educator chastises adult attitudes toward kids

Reporter Staff Special

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.—A nationally known United Methodist health educator issued a warning last week for adults who ignore the needs of children.

"We all know there are cargoes of children surrounded by the sharks of drugs, alcoholic, homicide, suicide, teen pregnancy," said Dr. M. Jocelyn Elders. "And we are sitting on the beach, drinking from our fountain of values and 'just say no' while we watch our children drown.

"I feel we must come to grips with the social problems that are destroying the hope for our most viable resource: our children.

"So many of us have been down the river pulling out bodies until we haven't had time to go upstream to fix the bridge," she said. "So many of us have been busy carrying out maintenance that we haven't had time to carry out a mission."

Dr. Elders, director of the Arkansas Department of Health, issued her warnings as a speaker to the recent quadrennial meeting of leaders of United Methodist institutional ministries.

M. Jocelyn Elders
'. . . watch our children drown'

A member of Hunter United Methodist Church in Little Rock, she has served as professor and chief resident in pediatrics at the University of Arkansas Medical Center.

Too many in 'Five-H Club'

She has received numerous awards and citations and was recently featured in "The New York Times Sunday Magazine" for her innovative programs on the health needs of children.

Dr. Elders said too many children belong to what she dubbed "The Five-H Club":

■ **Too many are hungry.** Every night in America in this country 23½ million children go to bed hungry;

■ **Too many are homeless.** Of the 3½ million homeless, more than one-third are children.

■ **Too many are helpless.** Of the 37 million Americans with no health insurance, one-fourth are children.

■ **Too many are hugless.** They have nobody to care and nobody to love them.

■ **Too many are hopeless.** Too many have no place to go and no way of reaching their potential.

"So many times we say, 'What can I do to save the children?' My answer? Just save one. If every adult could save one child, there wouldn't be any children in America left to be saved."

Dr. Elders said she has learned in her research on adolescent health issues and the implications for today's society that at least 40 percent of the children born to children living in poverty are four times as likely to have mental retardation.

Rather continue prisons

Government policymakers can legislate programs to prevent this situation, said the Arkansas doctor. But, instead, Americans "would rather continue to pay for prisons and special education programs to keep them ignorant, keep them poor, and forever enslaved.

"We don't mind paying $25,000 a year—the average cost of keeping a prisoner in prison for one year. We can send them to Harvard for that much. Yet we choose to spend our money the other way."

Dr. Elders concluded by saying there is not a "quick fix" for curing the problems of youths. But as United Methodists, she said, we must understand that "the strategies will be long and intense in order for us to see results."

She recommended such programs as:

✓ **Early childhood education.**
✓ **Comprehensive health education in the schools.**
✓ **Church-based programs to teach parents how to be parents.**
✓ **Teaching young males to take more responsibility.**
✓ **Compensatory school-based health services.**
✓ **College education and career opportunities for youths.**

"What is your responsiblity as religious and Christian leaders?" said Dr. Elders. "I feel our role is to be religious pacesetters for the rest of the community. We have to be the powerbrokers for the powerless. We have to make a difference for our children."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Bishops ask delay to '96 on ministry study action

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—Bishops of the United Methodist Church are forwarding a ministry study committee report to the church's 1992 General Conference with the recommendation that no action be taken until 1996.

The bishops explained that this will give them time to seek a consensus.

Efforts to send the committee's 52-page report directly to General Conference with only a few questions from the bishops were defeated during the recent Council of Bishops meeting.

The United Methodist Church and its predecessor bodies have sought to redefine and restructure ministry since 1944.

The 1984 General Conference authorized creation of a study committee which presented its report in 1988. Then that group, with some membership changes, was allowed to work another four years.

The study committee, whose members were appointed by the Council of Bishops, is required to report to the General Conference through the council.

After the bishops' latest action, Ruth Daugherty of West Chester, Pa., chairperson of the 35-member study committee, said, "The mandate for the study came from General Conference, and I hope the General Conference will make the decision on the work we have done on its behalf."

Committee vice-chairperson Bishop Bruce Blake of Dallas, said, "It will be up to General Conference to decide if there is consensus in the church."

If General Conference agrees to postpone action another four years, the bishops said they will make their own study of the theology and shape of ministry and report to the 1996 General Conference.

In their written response to the committee's report, the bishops acknowledge "major problems and inconsistencies" in the United Methodist tradition of ordination and representative ministry.

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Carter, Tutu advocate Christian values as basis for democracy

By ALICE SMITH
United Methodist News Service

ATLANTA—Christian values can provide the basis of a successful democracy if people who profess to be Christian wholeheartedly embrace them, former President Jimmy Carter told a gathering of 700 theologians, scholars and political leaders Nov. 14 in Atlanta.

Instead, Mr. Carter said, "many of the people on earth to whom we want to bring democracy . . . see Christianity as not representing the actions and teachings of Jesus Christ."

The former president was a major speaker at an international conference on Christianity and democracy at United Methodist-related Emory University.

Christians withdraw today

Whereas Christ reached out to others, touching the leper and placing his healing hand on blind eyes, Christians today withdraw unto themselves and minister to each other, Mr. Carter said.

"We preach to each other; we deal with each other while, next door or around the world, needs are unmet."

A Southern Baptist who teaches Sunday School at his home church in Plains, Ga., the former president said, "Even if we have the most benevolent feelings of compassion and concern for others, too often it is theoretical . . . (not) involv(ing) a Christian reaching out to a human being in need . . . as Christ did."

Mr. Carter said that although the United States was founded on belief in God, its citizens have not always been committed to values that are looked upon as Christian.

The United States is "not known throughout the world as a nation committed to peace," the former president said, citing U.S. involvement in the invasions of Grenada and Panama and the Persian Gulf War.

Support totalitarian rule

Mr. Carter also talked about U.S. support of totalitarian governments, such as Marcos in the Philippines or Pinochet in Chile, because they claimed to be anti-Communist, overlooking severe abuse of human rights of their own citizens.

With democratic governments emerging in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, Christians have "an open slate to describe the future," the former president said.

"We have reached the point where we can prove whether or not it is possible to exhibit the (Christian) characteristics of compassion . . . human rights . . . (and) peace with the democratic principles of freedom, of equality, of the right of the people to rule," he added.

Freedom for individuals

Another featured speaker at the conference, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, said individuals' freedom is at the heart of both Christianity and democracy, but the latter often has had a blemished track record in its support of freedom and human rights.

"People are made for freedom," the famed human-rights advocate and Nobel Peace Prize winner said.

"God insists we should have space to be human, and to be human is to be free—free to make personal decisions about a whole host of things without undue external pressure; free to participate or not to participate in political and social life; free to choose those who will rule over us."

Christians have often failed to uphold freedom for others, Archbishop Tutu said, citing such blights on human history as slavery, South African apartheid, the Inquisition and the Holocaust.

In these events and others, the archbishop asserted, "gross violations of human rights were supported and sanctioned, and often initiated by the church."

Counterbalancing this "sorry tale" of Christian history, however, is the other side of the story, Archbishop Tutu said.

He cited Christian leaders who stood against the status quo, leading the movement to abolish slavery, and more recently being involved in the transitions from authoritarian rule to more democratic regimes in Africa and elsewhere.

NCC report on sexuality finds 'pervasive discord'

United Methodist News Service

Acknowledging polarization over the issue of human sexuality, a National Council of Churches (NCC) committee has suggested that an ecumenical setting for dialogue can be a "location of grace where all of us can be helped."

United Methodist Bishop William B. Grove of Charleston, W.Va., committee chairman, said the next step is to establish regional and local dialogues between the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches (UFMCC), which has a specific ministry to lesbians and gay men, and other communions.

The report was given during the NCC's General Board meeting Nov. 13-15 in Indianapolis.

The dialogue committee, formed a year ago, noted that "evidence of pervasive discord (over sexuality) can be attested to in the relationships within and among member communions . . . as well as the society at large."

These issues—described as "a great seismic fault" over the face of U.S. Christianity—"pose a fundamental challenge to the peace and unity of the Church."

New resources and energies for identifying and addressing sexuality issues could result from an ecumenical forum.

"If and how this ecumenical response is to be developed is a decision that belongs to the whole community," the report said.

An ecumenical dialogue also is planned with leading Eastern Orthodox theologians about issues that have prompted five of the NCC's nine Orthodox member communions to suspend participation.

United Methodist Bishop James K. Mathews of Albany, N.Y., is one of the six members of the dialogue committee.

"The Eastern Orthodox Churches . . . are extremely valuable members and most have been a part of it since the beginning," he said.

Bishop Mathews, who has had personal relationships with a number of Orthodox leaders, says he believes the NCC and Orthodox groups have mutual needs.

In other business the NCC General Board:

■ Installed the Rev. Syngman Rhee, a Presbyterian, as the council's first Asian-American president;

■ Approved Involvement in the Interreligious Health-care Access Campaign, a national effort to promote universal health care;

■ Conducted a consultation on "Toward a World Made New: The Public Witness of the Churches and a New World Order."

Faith connections

ETHNIC HISTORY VOLUMES: The first tbree of four volumes devoted to the historical relationsbips of racial and ethnic groups to the United Methodist Church in the United States has been released, and the fourtb is due before tbe end of the year. The work is a cooperative effort between the denomination's Commission on Archives and History here and the United Methodist Publishing House. The volume devoted to Hispanic Americans is available in English and Spanish, tbe otbers in English.

HALL INDUCTEES: The United Metbodist Association of Communicators recently inducted five persons into its Hall of Fame. They are the Rev. **Gene W. Carter** of Concord, Calif; **Miron A. Morrill** of Hesston, Kan.; the Rev. **Charles A. McEowen** of St. Louis; **Charlotte O'Neal** of New York, all retired, and **Maude M. Turpin**, deceased. These bring to 49 the number of men and women admitted to the Hall of Fame since its creation in 1983.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE: The Louisville host committee for the United Methodist General Conference next May 5-15 is planning a special musical program to be given in two performances for delegates and visitors on May 10. Participants will include the widely known Junaluska Singers, based at the Southeastern Jurisdiction's assembly grounds.

NEW AFRICA RESOURCE: "Africa: Visions of Hope," a new mission study book, is now available through Cokesbury as an official resource for United Metbodist youtb and adults. The book, written by the Rev. **Gwinyai H. Muzorewa, Patrick Matsikenyiri** and **Cheryl W. Reames,** outlines the history and culture of Africa, and emphasizes the significance of United Methodist-related Africa University, due to open in March. The university is tbe denomination's first on the continent.

HISPANIC PLAN ENDORSED: Resolutions endorsing a United Metbodist National Plan for Hispanic Ministries and autonomy of the Metbodist Cburch in Puerto Rico were among highlights of the annual meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Nov. 8-10 of MARCHA, the United Methodist Hispanic caucus. The national plan initiated by MARCHA (Metbodists Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans) is being recommended for adoption by the cburch's top legislative body, to meet in Louisville, Ky., May 5-15.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Singing 'Miracles' testify to God's grace

Popular choir of mentally retarded adults celebrates nationwide release of new album

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

We are His Miracles,
Made by His Hand,
We are His Miracles,
By His Power we can stand.
We will never reach perfection
'Til we see Him face to face,
We are His Miracles,
*Miracles of Grace.**

The glittering, star-studded event happened six months ago, but the residents of Baddour Memorial Center for mentally retarded adults in Senatobia, Miss., are still excited about it.

In sequined gowns and tuxedos, tbe 20 mentally retarded singers and instrumentalists who form "The Miracles" celebrated the nationwide release of their newest album, "We Are His Miracles," witb a concert.

Producer flew in

John May, the executive producer of Word, Inc.—one of tbe world's top distributors of Cbristian music and books—flew in from Nashville for the performance. Word Inc. produced and is distributing the album to Christian bookstores in all 50 states.

And among the 200 fans present were 8-time Dove Award (gospel music) winners Dick and Melodie Tunney who wrote the album's title song.

This event was no small feat for a choir which had its first concert in 1979 in the First United Methodist Church in Potts Camp, Miss.

Since that time, the choir has appeared at the White House, Disney World, tbe "700 Club," Robert Sbuller's Crystal Cathedral in California, several international conventions, national and regional churcb meetings and bundreds of local churches of many denominations.

"The Miracles have to work long and hard to do what tbey do," says Sibyl Canon, public relations director for the center.

Among The Miracles' vocalists, only two can read music, she said, and many have difficulty reading words. So it takes many hours for them to learn a song.

Nonetheless, their repertoire consists of well over 100 songs, mostly religious but also semi-classical, jazz, country and popular.

The Miracles are selected by audition and some are exceptionally talented, Ms. Canon told the Reporter.

For example, keyboard artist Richard Hollie can play an arrangement note for note after hearing it only once, she said.

When Mr. Hollie was 15, she reports, he was picked up in an alley by police in Waco, Texas, stealing food from garbage cans.

They placed him in a home for the mentally retarded where be sat in a comer with a blanket over his head, speaking to no one.

A Baptist minister's wife coaxed him out from under tbe blanket by playing music. Later she gave him piano lessons.

Now, Mr. Hollie entertains thousands of people each year as he plays solos and accompanies The Miracles on their performance tours.

'Satchmo' a hit

Another big hit with audiences is Jeff Line's impersonation of Louis Armstrong's "When the Saints Go Marching In." Mr. Line plays a nonexistent trumpet and sings in a style that sounds amazingly like the immortal "Satchmo."

While The Miracles put on a top notch, slickly packaged, highly entertaining show, the musicians' purpose is more than a performance. They deliver a message of simple but strong Christian faith—both in their music and in their personal stories as told by Ms. Canon during their concerts.

Words and music by Dick and Melodie Tunney. Copyright 1991 BMG Songs, Inc., and Mel Music and Pamela Kay Music/ASCAP. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.

BADDOUR CENTER PHOTO

SENATOBIA, Miss.—John May, executive producer of Word, Inc., a recording company, "jams" on guitar with the Miracles during a recent concert to celebrate the nationwide release of the choir's latest album, "We Are His Miracles."

Baddour Center has strong UM ties

Reporter Staff Special

The Baddour Memorial Center for mentally retarded adults has a strong connection to the United Methodist Church botb in its history and in its ongoing support.

The idea of a residential community where mildly and moderately retarded adults could develop to their highest potential in many ways—including artistic and spiritual—began with Dr. Robert Pitzer nearly 20 years ago.

The chief executive of the Southeastern Methodist Agency for the Retarded then presented the idea to the John Baddour family.

In 1975, the Baddour family gave $1 million and 120 acres of land in Senatobia, Miss., to The United Methodist Church for the purpose of building the community.

Now, 13 years after the first resident arrived on the $3.6 million campus, the center has assets of some $10 million and an annual budget of $4 million.

"The Miracles," a singing group, was selected from the residents of the center. They gave their first performance at a United Methodist Church in 1979.

Since that time, the group has sung for United Methodists at one General Conference, two United Methodist Men's Congresses, three jurisdictional conferences, 12 annual conferences and more than 1,000 local churches in 30 states, according to a Baddour Center spokesperson.

The United Methodist connections remain strong, with the church's Mississippi Annual Conference contributing some $50,000 annually to the ministry.

—DIANE HUIE BALAY

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New UMR center, bylaws highlight board meeting

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

DALLAS—In a special service of commitment last week, the 42-member Governing Board of The United Methodist Reporter placed itself squarely behind efforts to complete a $4.2 million campaign for a new UMR Communications Center.

Gifts and pledges totaling $2.3 million since the campaign's beginning were announced during the board's annual meeting.

The plan is to erect and endow the maintenance for a 54,000-square-foot building on a six-acre site near the newspaper's current leased facility.

Bylaws adopted

The UMR Governing Board also adopted the organization's first set of formal bylaws. These state, among other points, that the Reporter is owned by the United Methodist annual conferences of Texas and New Mexico and is governed by a board representing each conference that publishes an edition of The United Methodist Reporter, The United Methodist Review (biweekly) and The United Methodist Record (monthly).

The board increased rates for local-church editions of all three newspapers for 1992 averaging about 4 percent and 1993 rates for annual-conference editions of all three averaging less than 3 percent.

The newspapers' statement of editorial policy, adopted by the Governing Board in 1979 and reviewed annually by successor boards, was referred to the editorial staff to recommend possible revision.

Board members received two two-page documents detailing the culmination of several months' discussions between leaders of UMR and of United Methodist Communications, the church's official communications agency as identified in the Book of Discipline.

United Methodist Communications officials had registered concern that the UMR Governing Board's adoption in 1990 of a mission statement seemed to "position [tbe Reporter] as a full service, churchwide communications agency."

New statement adopted

As a part of its new bylaws, UMR's Governing Board adopted a more descriptive mission statement which states that the Reporter's mission "is to provide news and information services to and for the church."

United Methodist Communications officials have indicated that, based on this action, they are prepared to rescind a resolution adopted last spring critical of UMR. Leaders of the two organizations have pledged "to continue to cooperate and work together to explore ways to provide the church with communication services it needs in a spirit of collegial recognition and affirmation."

The UMR Governing Board met under leadership of its chairman, the Rev. Lycurgus Starkey of St. Louis, and of General Manager the Rev. Daniel J. Louis Jr.

Dr. Dunnam hospitalized

The Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, the Reporter's Editor and Chief Executive Officer, was absent. He has been hospitalized in Dallas since Nov. 14 and diagnosed as having blood clots on the lungs. Daily reports of his progress were shared throughout the meeting. Dr. Dunnam underwent surgery on Nov. 22, the day after the board adjoumed.

For a recorded update on Dr. Dunnam's condition, readers are invited to phone (214) 638-6634.

Nominated to succeed Dr. Starkey as Governing Board chairman is the Rev. Wayne Fesmire, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Paducah, Ky. His nomination and that of Dr. Dunnam to continue as the organization's chief executive are subject to action in early February by the United Methodist Communications Council of Texas and New Mexico.

Newly elected to the board's 12-member Executive Committee were the Rev. Michael Patison (Central Texas conference), the Rev. Asbury Lenox (Texas conference), the Rev. Jerry Elrod (Desert Southwest conference), and the Rev. Eugene Winkler (Northem Illinois conference).

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Celebrate God's Grace—Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
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In His Name

William B. Oden

Jaroslav Pelikan, the Yale historical theologian, begins his book *Jesus Through The Centuries* with these words:

> **Regardless of what anyone may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western culture for almost twenty centuries. If it were possible, with some sort of supermagnet, to pull up out of that history every scrap of metal bearing at least a trace of his name, how much would be left? It is from his birth that most of the human race dates its calendars . . . and in his name that millions pray.**

Let this season include you as one of those millions. I urge you to share in the beautiful celebrations and services of Advent.

William B. Oden

Louisiana UM Churches: To Russia with Love

Louisiana United Methodist Church members are making sure that Christmas comes this year to the Russian people despite the hardships that the Russians are enduring.

"To Russia with Love" is the theme that the Centenary and Fisher United Methodist Churches adopted to share in the newly-developed Methodist Church in (formerly) Sverdlovsk, Russia. Inspired by the trip of the Rev. Dwight Ramsey and others from the Conference, the Rev. Willis Dear and the Centenary and Fisher Churches asked what they could do to help.

Mr. Ramsey said the people needed basic toiletry items such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving cream and makeup. So over a period of a month, both congregations gathered together several boxes and took them to Broadmoor UMC in Shreveport so that Mr. Ramsey and his group could take them on their return trip last September.

The two churches and their pastor then started a mission fund which continued the theme, "To Russia with Love." It was their hope that other churches in Louisiana would catch the vision of what God is doing and start similar missions in their congregations.

Fortunately, other churches had. The United Methodist Youth Fellowship at Blackwater UMC spearheaded a drive at that church to send four large suitcases full of toiletry articles to the new Methodist congregation in tbe Soviet Union. The Rev. Kirby Vining is their pastor.

Additionally, there is a Conference-wide drive currently to get books to Russian children for Christmas by sending a book about the birth of Christ to: The Methodist Church of Sverdlovsk, Lydia Istomina, 51 Lenina Avenue, Sverdlovsk 620083, USSR.

The Rev. Henry Bowdon, Jr., described the feeling behind these love gestures (and many others not mentioned here) when he wrote recently in bis church's newsletter:

> More things are wrought through prayers than this world dreams of. I believe that statement to be true. That truth was driven home to me again last week as I watched the evening news on CNN. There was a story of the World Bible Society distributing Bibles in Moscow, something that only recently became possible. That was exciting enough but the story showed members of the Supreme Soviet pushing and shoving to get their copy of the Bible. Wben a reporter asked why they were so excited about getting a copy of tbe Bible, one of these Soviet leaders responded, "It is very necessary that I bave a copy of the Bible because our new constitution will be founded on the human rights principles found in the New Testament!"
>
> As Mr. Bowden ended, "With God all things are possible!"

The Rev. Willis Dear inspects clothes collected for the new Methodist Church in Russia. It is part of the Centenary and Fisher United Methodist Churches' "To Russia With Love" project.

Members of Alexandria's First United Methodist Church labor with the Habitat for Humanity organization to build a house in their community. The project, begun on Labor Day, took six additional weeks to complete.

Laboring in the Lord's Vineyards

First United Methodist Church of Alexandria embarked on an ambitious project this fall, with over 100 men, women and youth giving their time and efforts to blitz-build a house from scratch over the Labor Day weekend.

The project was in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity, a national, non-profit organization that provides decent housing for the working poor. Mr. Wayne McConnell, coordinator of the church's efforts, said that First Metbodist was the first Covenant Church with the Habitat program in central Louisiana.

"We obligated ourselves last year by becoming a Covenant Church, which means that we pledged ourselves to do our best in offering housing for those willing to work for it. Our church is blessed with many resources — we're planning to build a million-dollar activities facility, and if we can do that, we have an obligation to use some of our resources for people in need."

The Social Concerns Commission of the church began the efforts by contributing $1000 to the Habitat project. Children collected change to purchase the front door of the house. Youth and adult Sunday school classes contributed money, air conditioners, labor, prayers and food. The Habitat program supplied the remainder of the building materials needed.

During the next few weeks, volunteer and paid workers completed the house, a four-bedroom home for the Harrell family of Alexandria. The Harrells were selected by the Habitat organization because of the hours of work the family contributed. Tbey will be purchasing the house over 20 years with no interest.

People in the community who heard about the house-blitz called to volunteer their services, and the church received "an immeasurable amount of good public relations" from media coverage of the event, according to Associate Pastor Ron Dauphin. "We hope that we've set the pace for churches in central Louisiana. During the construction, folks were already asking if this would be an annual event. We're working now for next Labor Day."

Habitat for Humanity is gaining in strength throughout the Louisiana area as many of our United Methodist Churches are finding creative ways to help the working poor find adequate housing.

The Louisiana Annual Conference joins in prayers for the family of the **Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III,** editor and chief executive of the *United Methodist Reporter.* Memorials may be sent to the United Methodist Reporter, 2520 W. Commerce, Dallas, Texas 75212. More information inside.

It's Been Mailed!

Look for the Conference Coordinated Mailings appearing soon in each local church! Packed with news, information and upcoming events, no pastor or local church leader will want to miss it! Just make sure that each important piece of material gets to the appropriate chairperson or area of concern. Help our conference to spread the message!

Congratulations!

The Reverend Heaton Crammer and his wife, Earlena, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Pineville United Methodist Church Saturday, November 30th. The Crammers have three children.

For Your Information . . .

Tbe **Louisiana United Methodist Reporter** welcomes information about persons, places and events in the local churches, districts and the conference. We will print as much as space and our guidelines permit.

Since we work at least two weeks ahead for each edition, it is vitally important that you send your material to us at least one month ahead. If your news has already occurred, please send it to our office as soon as possible.

Accompanying pictures sbould be clearly labeled for proper return. Color photos are acceptable. They reprint best if the subject(s) of the photo are clear, with good definition (not fuzzy, blurry, too "busy" or far away). Please clearly identify all people and the place in eacb picture.

All information should be sent to: The Louisiana United Methodist Reporter; 527 North Boulevard; Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Guinness Book of Records: Pillow Fight First of its Type

When 539 youth (out of the 628 persons who attended) participated in the Louisiana Annual Conference Council on Youth Ministries Fall Convo Pillow Fight, many did not realize that they were making history.

Mrs. Carolyn Dove, Conference Youth Coordinator, sent the necessary information after the September 28th event to the **Guinness Book of Records** and received this reply: "The is a most unusual story and I believe it is the first of its type that we have received. For this reason it is very difficult for [us] to be able to say whether or not you have established any kind of record . . . all records are kept on file for possible future reference."

The youth of the Louisiana Conference had hoped to break a record. Instead, they have created a history-making event to set a record for others to try to break. The challenge has been made. Others are urged to respond!

Jurisdictional Director Position Open

The South Central Jurisdictional office has announced that it will be receiving applications for the position of the Executive Director of the Jurisdiction. The Reverend Earl B. Carter who has been director since 1985 has disclosed that he will request the retired relationship at the North Arkansas Annual Conference session in June of 1992 with his retirement becoming effective on September 1, 1992.

Persons who wish a copy of the job description and the application form may contact the South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228, or call 214/321-7077. All applications must be submitted by January 10, 1992.

The South Central Jurisdiction is an equal opportunity employer.

Our Methodist Family

Ms. Angela DeHart, a member of the Abbeville United Methodist Church, was recently recognized with a pin for eleven years of perfect attendance in Sunday school. She is a 1991 graduate of Abbeville High School where she received numerous honors for her academic achievements. She has also been active in the choir, Vacation Bible School, the Good Samaritan Club and various play productions in the church. The Rev. Ed Dilworth is her pastor.

Angela DeHart

Mrs. Bertha Wall celebrated her 91st birthday in 1991, while members of Epps United Methodist Church celebrated her 54 years of devoted service to their congregation. In years gone by Mrs. Wall taught the youth in her car when there were no classrooms available. The Reverend Gary L. Elliott is the pastor of Epps.

World Communion Sunday was the occasion for the Slaughter United Methodist Church to pay tribute to Ms. Ethel Stott for her twenty-five years as Communion Steward for that church. Ms. Stott, above with the Rev. L. Darwin Brecheen, pastor of the church, was presented a plaque.

Editorial

Thank God for 'blessed nuisance'

Chapters begin.

Chapters end.

A remarkable chapter in Christian communications began in 1969 when the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III was named editor-general manager of the regionally circulated Texas Methodist.

That chapter ended with Dr. Dunnam's death while at the pinnacle of his ministry as editor and chief executive of the nation's largest religious weekly newspaper, The United Methodist Reporter (see related story in this issue).

We, his colleagues and friends at UMR, join with countless others across the church in mourning his untimely death.

Although a rich and jam-packed 22 years long, the chapter in religious journalism etched across the church by Dr. Dunnam's life and times ended much too soon. He was only 48 years old and still brimming with ideas and projects to serve the church's communications needs.

"Time" magazine religion editor Richard Ostling's assessment of Dr. Dunnam's ministry underscores the depth of our collective loss.

"[He] was the most significant newsman in mainline Protestantism in his generation," Mr. Ostling said.

Admittedly biased, we agree.

Among other things, through the rapid expansion during the 1970s of the Reporter as a national newspaper, Dr. Dunnam gave needed new life to the tradition of independent publishing within the church.

Although the Reporter is owned by seven annual conferences in the southwest and is the official publication of various annual conferences and local churches via their own editions of the newspaper, its "inside" pages forged an identity under Dr. Dunnam's leadership of vigorous editorial freedom and independence.

One result, according to a United Methodist bishop and long-time friend, was a widespread perception of the strong-willed editor as a "blessed nuisance."

Indeed, as a loving critic of the church, Dr. Dunnam had a keen and often troubling eye for its foibles. But he rarely failed to combine criticism with constructive analysis and proposals for "doing it right."

He was uncompromising in his insistence on excellence, but to those who knew and worked closely with him, he revealed the heart of a servant of Christ who deeply desired to know and do God's will.

The chapter that was Spurgeon Dunnam stands as a challenge to us and others in the church similarly to do our best for the glory of God.

Fortunately, in God's mysterious grace, new chapters are always beginning.

Such is the case in the life and ministry of The United Methodist Reporter and in the ongoing work of religious journalism.

We hope you will join your prayers with ours in asking God's help for writing a new chapter in that work and thanking God for the example of excellence set for us by Spurgeon M. Dunnam III.

DRAWING BY TOM GIBSON

In Memory . . .

Significant events and achievements in the ministry of the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III are depicted in a montage created by Tom Gibson, director of UMR's Mission Communications. Dr. Dunnam had been Reporter editor and chief executive for 22 years at the time of his recent death (see related story, editorial and personal reflections about Dr. Dunnam elsewhere in this issue).

Faithfully yours

Spurgeon M. Dunnam III saluted by his colleagues

Influence spoke his 'joys abroad'

John A. Lovelace

Any day now we may receive a news report and an editorial from Zion. If anyone could do it, Spurgeon could.

The linkage between "beautiful, beautiful Zion" and Spurgeon dates back several weeks ago when I was taking my turn leading the staff's Monday-morning devotional period.

As I frequently do, I used musical examples to try to convey a message. Specifically I compared the attitude toward life conveyed by the old Broadway musical showstopper, "Standin' on the corner, watchin' all the girls go by" with what seems to me to be a far more Christian attitude.

That attitude, I said, is found in the final hymn in the new United Methodist Hymnal. Without further introduction I launched us into song:

Come we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne,
And thus surround the throne.

We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God.

The refrain had hardly ended when Spurgeon moved us insistently on to the second verse:

Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heavenly king,
But children of the heavenly king;
May speak their joys abroad,
May speak their joys abroad.

We're marching. . . .

I offer those words as witness to his faith. Through his many travels and enormous influence, Spurgeon certainly did speak his joys abroad. And more—Spurgeon never refused to sing.

—JOHN A. LOVELACE

Mr. Lovelace is Managing Editor of the Reporter.

He had uncanny way of knowing

Denise Stovall

On a blustery October day in Chicago I took a city train north from my mother's house to Lake Forest, Ill., for what would be my version of "A Close Encounter of the Third Kind"—meeting the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III.

I had just been named the 1982 recipient of the Stoody-West Fellowship for Graduate Study in Communications given by the church's communications agency and had been invited to accept the award during its board of directors meeting near Chicago.

I was extremely nervous but felt more at ease when I was warmly greeted by most of the board members and staff during a cafeteria-style dinner.

But one man on the agency's board pressed me hard to tell him how I planned to serve the church when I completed my graduate studies.

That was Spurgeon.

Later I stood before the board and staff of United Methodist Communications and said, "Thank you for selecting me to receive this award. I hope it will enable me to become a religious communicator—just like you."

Four years later Spurgeon invited me to join the editorial staff of The United Methodist Reporter and become one four black writers to achieve that distinction.

I was terrified at the thought of interviewing bishops, jumping on planes alone to agency meetings, or calling up strangers for news and information. But Spurgeon was sure I could handle it. And who doubted Spurgeon's judgment?

Whether you agreed with his methods or not, Spurgeon had an uncanny way of knowing "those people called United Methodists."

He made you happy, he made you sad. He knew his staff's potential for growth, and he insisted we share our faith.

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Ms. Stovall is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

Church won't quickly forget him

Daniel J. Louis

Most Christians impact the course of the church like a hand thrust into a pail of water and then withdrawn.

The water accommodates the presence of the hand for a time just as the church and the world accommodate each of us for a time.

But, when the hand is withdrawn from the pail, the water simply closes where the hand was, settles down, and leaves no identifying sign of our having been present.

The church will not so quickly fill nor soon forget the presence that was Spurgeon M. Dunnam III.

Spurgeon Dunnam was far more than just the editor of The United Methodist Reporter and its sister publications which evolved under his leadership.

Over the last two decades leaders across the church (even in those annual conferences that do not utilize the services of the Reporter) have increasingly wanted to know what the Reporter—which in most of their minds meant Spurgeon Dunnam—had to say about important issues in the church.

For more than two decades—longer than most bishops are active in their role—Spurgeon, in response to the need for an independent voice reporting on the life of the church, was committed to helping United Methodists know about their denomination.

He was equally committed to providing a forum where both disgruntled detractors and apologetic advocates of the church's activities could find free self-expression.

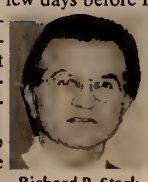
This free exchange of views among people who feel and care deeply about their church contributed significantly to the success of what has grown under Spurgeon's leadership to be the largest weekly religious publication in the world.

Spurgeon M. Dunnam III is gone. But those to whom he has left the Reporter's legacy will continue in his memory to enable the people called United Methodists to blend knowledge with vital piety.

—DANIEL J. LOUIS

Mr. Louis is General Manager of the Reporter.

'Balance' was valued ingredient



Richard P. Stark

Spurgeon Dunnam called me in May 1986—just a few days before I was to be reappointed as associate minister at First United Methodist Church, Plano, Texas.

He wanted to know if I would be interested in talking to him about a new position being created at The United Methodist Reporter. We knew about each other, but neither of us knew the other well. But for some reason, I said "Yes" and I showed up for a 2 p.m. interview.

By Reporter standards it was a short interview and I was out of there by nine that evening. By the time I had completed my 30-minute drive home, I knew I had been called to the UMR staff.

Spurgeon's hard-driving, aggressive, demanding style seemed to overmatch my softer, more reflective approach to life. But adding me to his staff was an intentional decision on his part to bring about what he saw as a necessary balance to his person and his office.

Having "balance" and being "in synch" were vital elements in his ongoing efforts to serve God and do right in all things.

Frequently, "doing right" meant doing it Spurgeon's way; and yet part of his genius was his willingness and ability to bring together a highly competent, diverse staff who would challenge him at virtually every turn.

Illustrative of Spurgeon's jammed-pack, intense lifestyle was his daily study Bible, which he stuffed with seemingly hundreds of pieces of paper, most with scrawled notes and personal reflections.

So I was particularly curious to find on his desk this past week a devotional guide with only one piece of paper and one underlined passage. In characteristic blue pen, Spurgeon had underlined some familiar words from the Book of Joshua: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

That was Spurgeon's self-understanding. There is no higher calling.

—RICHARD PAUL STARK

Mr. Stark is Executive Assistant to the Editor and Chief Executive.

Rare praise helped me to grow

Cynthia B. Astle

Recently one of my UMR colleagues commended me to our Governing Board as "one of the few people in the building who stands up to Spurgeon Dunnam."

With Spurgeon's passing, that distinction has become less burden and more blessing than I realized before.

Spurgeon believed with all his heart in the Methodist ideal of "going on to perfection." From his viewpoint, any authentic "going on to perfection" had to be marked by a struggle equal to the worth of the goal.

One such struggle has been my effort—at Spurgeon's invitation—to learn how to draft UMR editorials.

The offer represented his ultimate compliment, because the top two lefthand columns on Page 2 were where Spurgeon "lived" in the newspaper. We often joke that UMR is figuratively littered with the bodies of would-be editorial writers who failed to meet Spurgeon's exacting standards.

After what seemed like an agonizing eternity of misfires on my part, I hit the editorial bull's-eye twice with Spurgeon in the past six months. I was astonished; he was not.

His brief words of commendation—he was never effusive with his praise—now mean more than ever, because they represent confirmation of something he saw in me that I wasn't sure I saw in myself.

I'm a better writer and a better Christian for having wrestled with his demands. I wish I'd had the chance to tell him that.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Ms. Astle is Associate Editor of the Reporter.

'Might God work via inaction?'

Stephen Swecker

I quit the Reporter twice during my first nine months as a member of the editorial staff.

Gently stated, Spurgeon Dunnam and I did not "hit it off" when we landed together in 1982.

In our efforts to collaborate on writing editorials, he was always right and I was always wrong. The reverse was also true.

You see the problem.

Spurgeon was the most frustrating person I'd ever known. Quitting seemed the only way to preserve my sanity and to get on with my life. My sense of failure was overpowering.

I even failed at quitting. Spurgeon and I survived in professional limbo for several months while I tried to piece together a new start. Amazingly, he exhibited previously unwitnessed patience with my halting efforts to "help out" as I was able.

But Spurgeon never let go of the possibility that we could work things out. Once he told me it would be "tragic" if I left. Another time, he reminded me of contributions I'd made even when it seemed I'd done nothing to earn his respect.

Finally, he called me into his office and asked me: "Do you believe God works through inaction as well as action?" Combatively, I allowed as how God could work any way God chose to work.

"Look," he said, "you've quit twice and haven't gone anywhere. We've tried but haven't found anyone to replace you. Maybe God is trying to tell us something."

We stared at each other in wary silence.

"What do you say?" he asked.

"Let's do it," I replied.

We then shook hands and "did it" for the next eight and one-half years.

The truth was, Spurgeon wouldn't let me quit. Once he'd made his mind up that I could do the job, he wasn't about to admit he was wrong.

Genius, a wise man once said, is 90 percent tenacity. Spurgeon Dunnam was the most tenacious person I've ever known.

—STEPHEN L. SWECKER

Mr. Swecker is Faith Forum Page Editor of the Reporter.

The United Methodist REPORTER

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Editor and Chief Executive

Daniel J. Louis
General Manager

John A. Lovelace
Managing Editor

Darrell L. Bryant
Conference Editions

Stephen L. Swecker
Faith Forum Page Editor

Kay Fielder
Local Editions

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Faith watch

FOOD TO MOSCOW: The first food parcels sent to the Soviet Union through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) should arrive in Moscow by Dec. 15. UMCOR, part of the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries, is working with the World Council of Churches as lead U.S. church-related agency for food and medical relief in Moscow this winter. Two UMCOR representatives—the Rev. **R. Bruce Weaver**, interim associate general secretary, and **Lloyd Rollins**, secretary for emergency ministries—met with Russian Orthodox Church officials recently in Moscow to establish a local committee to receive goods. The committee also has representatives of Baptist, Lutheran, Georgian Orthodox and Armenian communities in Moscow.

ATTENTION, K-MART SHOPPERS: United Methodist Bishop C.W. **Hancock** (Alabama-West Florida Area); Free Methodist Bishop **Robert F. Andrews**, Oklahoma City; and several United Methodist pastors and district superintendents are among more than 300 church figures endorsing a boycott of K Mart stores because the corporation's Waldenbooks division sells what officials of the American Family Association, Tupelo, Miss., say is pornography. The Mississippi group is headed by the Rev. **Donald Wildmon**, a United Methodist.

EXPENSE DEBATE: The 1992 United Methodist General Conference budget of $3.1 million amounts to about $615 per minute for the quadrennial legislative assembly, 260 church journalists and conference delegates were told in Louisville, Ky., recently. In addition to the budgeted amount, a substantial amount of other church funds will be spent for various related expenses, said the Rev. **DeWayne Woodring**, conference business manager. The briefing session in Louisville was sponsored by United Methodist News Service and the United Methodist Association of Communicators.

CONFLICT IN YUGOSLAVIA: Escalating civil conflict in Yugoslavia has caused a growing number of people to flee to the neighboring countries of Austria, Italy and Hungary. United Methodist Bishop **Heinrich Bolleter** of Zurich, Switzerland, reports that refugees have been given shelter by United Methodist churches in those countries. The United Methodist Committee on Relief, working with its partner, Church World Service and Witness, has responded with funds to assist those who have been displaced by the conflict.

Resurrection voice follows Oakland fire

United Methodists suffer losses, reach out to community after disaster

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

OAKLAND, Calif.—Scorched red brick chimneys reach forlornly skyward from their beds of ashes and charred wood. Weeks after Oakland's Oct. 20 firestorm, resinous fumes—all that remains of once-stately pines and eucalyptus—still emanate from the torched neighborhoods of the Oakland Hills, about 25 miles across the bay from San Francisco.

From such utter devastation it seems no life could rise.

Yet the word from the United Methodist congregation closest to the firestorm remains the word of resurrection.

"You cry for a day or so, then you pick up the pieces and go on," said Connie Hosemann, a member of Montclair United Methodist Church.

The home of Mrs. Hosemann and her husband, Bob, was destroyed by the firestorm. Some of their belongings were rescued by their son, Stephen, a student at the University of California at Berkeley who evaded police lines to save, among other things, his mother's harp.

In his urgency to save his parents' belongings, Stephen forgot to rescue anything of his own.

"The Hosemanns told me that one good thing about the firestorm was that they learned what kind of young man they had reared," said the Rev. Earl L. Langguth, Montclair pastor.

In the area, dozens of fliers flutter from telephone poles seeking the whereabouts of missing pets. Addresses for devastated homes glare in bright-orange spray paint from the blackened hulks of automobiles.

The agony of loss inflicted by the conflagration screams from a crudely lettered cardboard sign: "Don't gawk at human misery! Sightseers not allowed!"

The firestorm killed an estimated 25 people, destroyed 3,000 dwellings and left as many as 5,000 Oakland residents homeless. Early estimates put property damage at $5 billion; the full loss has yet to be tallied.

In the midst of such losses, the church learned what kind of people it has among its members, the pastor said—people like the Hosemanns.

Montclair lay leader Eva Sheldon, a nurse, hiked into the hills countless times in an effort to determine the condition of members' homes. Miraculously, a small enclave including the homes of three families from the church escaped destruction.

Another member, Lora Lewis, stayed home from her job with the Social Security Administration to staff the church office, systemically contacting church members to determine their needs.

Mr. Langguth said the efforts of these and other members sustained the congregation and freed him to serve as a counselor at the firestorm crisis center.

"I may be the pastor in charge, but I'm not the only minister!" he asserted.

Among pieces Mrs. Hosemann has been able to "pick up" were gifts of two chairs and a sewing machine from members of First United Methodist Church of San Leandro, Calif., about 10 miles south of Montclair.

More than 80 San Leandro members offered their homes to people made homeless by the firestorm.

Other offers of help came from much farther. Among United Methodists eager to help are the members of Geneva Hope United Methodist Church in Shepherd, Mich., he added.

Geneva Hope "adopted" Montclair as its "mission of the month" for November. Contributions from Geneva Hope will be sent to montclair to assist firestorm victims.

"I'm encouraged by the discovery of wide-awake United Methodist congregations," Mr. Langguth told the Reporter. "I've had a number of telephone calls from pastors inside and outside our California-Nevada Annual Conference asking what they could do to help."

Along with that knowledge, Montclair members are treasuring these verses, written by their pastor and offered by him at a United Methodist district "service of memory and resurrection" at Montclair the Sunday after the firestorm:

"The storm is passed, the promise we recall
"That 'all things will for good be made to tend'
"Shall not this promise touch our fatted hearts
"Shall not we praise our Maker to the end
"That we shall serve each other, and reach out
"To share and help, to lift up and console?
"The loss of things—a tragedy—and yet?
"A small price should it make our spirits whole!"

STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA BUIE ASTLE

OAKLAND, Calif.—A stark chimney, scorched trees and rubble are all that remain of this house following the recent Oakland firestorm. United Methodists suffered losses but helped the community get going again.

EDITOR'S NOTE: United Methodists and others in northern California have endured four major natural disasters—earthquake, drought, freeze and firestorm—over the past two years. Their stories of disaster response, spiritual reassessment and risk preparedness offer significant witness for congregations throughout The United Methodist Church.

NEXT IN THE SERIES:
Dec. 13—Loma Prieta Earthquake
Dec. 20—San Joaquin Freeze
Dec. 27—Disasters: Not IF, but WHEN?

Saving Grace: When Disaster Challenges Faith

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Winter Haven, FL 33880

UMR Editor Spurgeon Dunnam III dies at age 48

From staff and wire reports

Memorial services were held Nov. 27 in Dallas for the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, one of the most influential figures in The United Methodist Church and in religious journalism.

Dr. Dunnam died Nov. 25 from complications following surgery to remove blood clots from his lungs. He was 48.

Dr. Dunnam had led The United Methodist Reporter since 1969. He had joined the staff four years earlier while a student at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology.

From regional to national

During his tenure as editor the newspaper grew from a regional publication (The Texas Methodist) reaching 80,000 subscribers to a national newsweekly (The United Methodist Reporter) with a circulation of more than 500,000.

During the past decade Dr. Dunnam helped launch three additional religious newspapers: the nondenominational National Christian Reporter in 1981, the biweekly United Methodist Review in 1983 and the monthly United Methodist Record in 1991.

Since 1983 he also served as chairman of the board of Religious News Service, the nation's only wire service specializing in news of religion.

Richard Ostling, religion editor of "Time" magazine, said, Dr. Dunnam was "the most significant newsman in mainline Protestantism in his generation."

The Rev. Joe Hale, general secretary of the World Methodist Council, said, "Beyond his remarkable achievements in religious journalism, he was a convinced Christian and a committed churchman. His faith perspective always embraced the world. Over the past decade he emerged as a world Christian statesman."

The Rev. Randolph Nugent, general secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, said, "Spurgeon was a fearless critic of what he felt wrong and a tireless supporter of what he believed. . . . We will not see his like again in our time."

Spurgeon Dunnam
. . .'most significant newsman'

Dr. Dunnam was an elected director of the Global Ministries board and represented that board on his final international travel in September as a member of the delegation which helped consecrate the first United Methodist congregation in Russia.

'Church is better informed'

Bishop Rueben Job and Roger L. Burgess, president and general secretary, respectively, of United Methodist Communications, said, "The church has been better informed because of the ministry of Spurgeon Dunnam III. He will be long remembered for his 20-hour workdays, his late-night phone calls to his colleagues and his burning bright desire to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the printed word."

Bishop Earl G. Hunt Jr., president of The Foundation for Evangelism, said, "Spurgeon Dunnam stepped into a very unfortunate vacuum in our church and created a viable organ of communication when the denomination itself had none. He was a worker of miracles in his own field and a man of impeccable integrity and strong Christian commitment. All of us will mourn his departure from the busy stage of the Church Militant at this critical moment."

David L. Rooke, chairman of the UMR Foundation board and former chief executive of Dow Chemical U.S.A., said, "His personality is what got me interested in the Reporter foundation activities, and the more I worked with him the more I was certain that this was a good choice on my part. In a very short time I grew to love the man and have fantastic respect for what he was trying to do for Christianity and specifically for The United Methodist Church. We're gonna miss him, but, as is typical of Spurgeon, he has already drawn the map, and we're gonna do our best to follow that map to fruition."

'Always the suspicion'

In addition to publishing newspapers for United Methodists, the Reporter also publishes national newspapers for the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as well as regional papers for many denominations, including two Roman Catholic dioceses.

> *"We will not see his like again in our time."*
> —Randolph Nugent

In a 1986 interview, Dr. Dunnam said his dual role as a reporter and participant in church affairs meant that he could go almost everywhere and yet never be fully a part of any group because "there's always the suspicion that you might be out to expose them."

Yet, he said, the dual role was critical to his personal satisfaction.

"I like whatever prominence and influence I have in the church," he said. "If it ever gets to the point where the only thing I'm permitted to do in order to keep this job is to do this job, then I don't want it."

He was a delegate to 1988 sessions of United Methodism's highest policymaking body, the General Conference, and to 1976, 1980, 1984 and 1988 sessions of the church's South Central Jurisdiction, which elects and assigns bishops for an eight-state region.

He was ordained an elder in the North Texas Annual Conference in 1969 and remained active in conference agencies.

He leaves his wife, Dottie; two daughters, Delilah Ray, 20, of Houston, and Delayna, 14; one son, Daniel, 12; his parents, the Rev. Spurgeon and Thelma Dunnam of Longview, Texas, and a sister, Jeannie Wallace of Longview.

Memorial gifts

Memorial gifts may be made in Dr. Dunnam's name to the United Methodist Reporter Foundation building fund for a new communications center in Dallas. Address P. O. Box 660271, Dallas, TX 75266.

Key events in editor's ministry

Key events in the ministry of the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III:

1969

Named editor-general manager of the 80,000-circulation Texas Methodist at age 26.

1976

Elected a director of the United Methodist General Commission on Communication.

Elected first of five times as delegate to South Central Jurisdiction conference.

1981

Acknowledged the nationwide growth of the Reporter—soon to top 500,000 circulation—by changing its name from the Texas Methodist to The United Methodist Reporter.

Launched the National Christian Reporter for interdenominational readership.

Traveled to China under auspices of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

1983

Became chairman of Religious News Service, the nation's only wire service specializing in religious news.

Headed UMR editorial team investigating the National Council of Churches and primary author of an editorial calling for structural reforms which was cited a year later as key in the NCC's reorganization.

1984

Launched the biweekly United Methodist Review.

Named Communicator of the Year by The United Methodist Association of Communicators.

1985

Six-month sabbatical in Kenya with his family resulted in strong ties to church leaders in Africa.

Served as a delegate to the 15th World Methodist Conference in Nairobi.

1987

Aided United Methodist leaders in an investigation of charges against the athletic program of Southern Methodist University and helped independent committee of bishops prepare and make public report of its findings.

Went to South Africa as part of a World Methodist Council delegation to urge the government to abandon apartheid.

1988

Served as delegate to General Conference. Played a significant role in the revision of the theological guidelines for The United Methodist Church.

Elected as a director of the General Board of Global Ministries.

1990

Served again on a World Methodist Council delegation to South Africa to observe the beginning of the dismantling of apartheid.

1991

Launched the monthly United Methodist Record.

Served as a delegate to the 16th World Methodist Conference in Singapore.

Served on a delegation to consecrate the first United Methodist congregation in Russia following the fall of communism.

Faith connections

NEW 'TOOL' COMING: United Methodist theologians are among the 100 Bible scholars slated to contribute to what has been called "preachers' most important tool," The New Interpreter's Bible. The 12-volume commentary on the Bible and the Old Testament Apocrypha will be published in increments between 1994 and the year 2000 by The United Methodist Publishing House. According to project director **Jack Keller**, the compilation of biblical text, scholarly interpretation and application will draw upon the "best biblical scholarship" among Christian and Jewish theologians.

RESOURCE AVAILABLE: "Africa: Visions of Hope," a new mission study book, is available as an official resource for United Methodist youth and adults. The book, written by the Rev. **Gwinyai H. Muzorewa, Patrick Matsikenyiri** and **Cheryl W. Reames**, outlines the history and culture of Africa and emphasizes the significance of United Methodist-related Africa University. The school is due to open in March as the denomination's first on the continent. According to editor **Donn C. Downall**, the book and an accompanying teacher's edition provide "separate lesson plans for youth and for adults, as well as some ideas for a congregation to relate effectively to Africa."

GROUP ELECTS: The Association of Physically Challenged Ministers of the United Methodist Church, during its recent annual meeting in Nashville, elected the Rev. **Nancy Webb** as new co-chairperson. Ms. Webb, pastor of the Elderslie-St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Baltimore, succeeds the Rev. **Kathy Reeves**, who resigned. Ms. Reeves is the new executive secretary for persons with handicapping conditions for the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries. Both clergywomen have visual impairments.

RECEIVES AWARD: **Royce O. Reynolds**, a North Carolina businessman and an active United Methodist layman, was presented the 1991 Stanley S. Kresge Award recently at United Methodist-related Greensboro (N.C.) College. The Kresge Award is made annually by the United Methodist Foundation for Christian Higher Education, Inc., to recognize and encourage the support of United Methodist-related educational institutions. Mr. Reynolds, a member of West Market Street United Methodist Church in Greensboro, is chairman of the board of Crown Automotive Management Co., a large automobile retail empire. Since 1984, he and his wife have funded the Royce and Jane Reynolds Foundation, devoted to supporting United Methodist mission projects.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Mission heads debate service, accountability

STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.—Ha Kerra Marie Singleton, 17, (front) sings with the Youth Gospel Choir of Neighborhood Center of the United Methodist Church, Harrisburg, Penn., at a recent national conference on the church's institutional ministries.

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—How can locally based United Methodist-related mission institutions maintain accountability to the church and continue their historic focus on women, youth and children?

That was the top question of some 300 executive directors, board members and volunteers of such agencies during a recent meeting.

One highlight was a trip to the Interchurch Center in New York City to visit corporate offices of the church's General Board of Global Ministries, the top-level unit of the church to which these agencies are related.

The session featured a panel discussion on how the mission board's National Division and the many national mission institutions are preparing for the 21st Century.

Executive directors of three United Methodist-related community centers were asked to respond to policy actions of the mission board's Women's and National Divisions from the past six years concerning agencies which those divisions own or administer.

'Serve needs of poor . . .'

Those politics include a mission statement which reads, in part:

"The purpose of the National Mission Institutions is to serve the needs of poor and marginalized sectors of the population with primary focus on the needs of women, children and youth.

"These institutions express the church's commitment to provide human services according to the spirit and values of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and empower the constituencies served. . . ."

Panelist Ruth Palmer, executive director of the Wesley Community Center in Houston for nearly 18 years, told the group that the Women's Division is correct in asking community centers to give a primary focus on women, children and youth. However, she said,"The statement should include the word *families*."

The Houston center, with a budget of $2.1 million, receives $17,500 from the National Division through money raised by the Women's Division.

"I know we are not restricted to just ministries with women and children," she said. "But we should start out with the premise of strengthening the family."

Ms. Palmer told the Reporter that, at her community center, working with families is sometimes the same as focusing on women and children because her constituents are usually single parents.

Another question Ms. Palmer raised concerned a proposal that governing boards of local mission institutions be confirmed by representatives of the National Division.

How do they know?

"Our question is 'How would National Division people in New York know if someone would be a good member of our local board?' " she said.

Lula Garrett, assistant general secretary for institutional ministries, said Global Ministries staff "realized that this proposal may cause a problem in some institutions because it seems like we are trying to tell them who should be on the board.

"Obviously we will depend on local people to give us names for their board," she said.

Ms. Garrett told the Reporter that some people have expressed concern that this proposal might happen immediately. As of now, she said, the plan will be used with only one locally based agency that has gone through a transition and needed help selecting its board.

Although Ms. Palmer said this issue was of great concern to her, she added, "I realize that the Women's Division is trying to minimize any liability they may have in some community centers if local boards do not take action to protect the center.

"We hope the risk factor can be minimized so that these proposed policies won't be cumbersome to the agencies. This has to be worked out so we can be about the mission of serving the people we need to serve in our communities."

Two new videos challenge racism, jingoism in media

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE—To hear Western newscasters, writers, historians and advertisers describe our society:

- The only drug addicts in the United States are black or Hispanic men younger than 30;
- Child abuse is a public concern only if the victims come from affluent, white families;
- Native Americans "massacred" whites, while whites who invaded Native American territories "conquered" and "defended";
- The only ethnic communities with significant opinions about beauty, style, quality and culture are Euro-American.

Two new videos and accompanying study guides challenge these notions, and take a hard look at the impact of racial bias and jingoism of Western media.

Also, the videos and manuals suggest ways that decision-makers in the news gathering and advertising arenas can improve their work by including people of color on their staffs and in focus groups.

"Racism in the News" is a 23-minute piece that asks of persons of color, who are media professionals, lobbyists and educators, probing questions on the influence of racism on news coverage and reporting.

Produced by Spectra Communications in Seattle for United Methodist Communications, video and manual are designed primarily for editors, writers, producers and other news professionals to incite discussion about the myth of "objective" reporting.

The heart of "Racism in the News" is explained by Clint Wilson, a journalism professor at Howard University in Washington. Mr. Wilson asserts that news-media bias against persons of color manifests itself in at least four ways: exclusion, portrayal as threats to society, confrontation and stereotyping.

While Mr. Wilson acknowledges the legitimacy of stories about black-Jewish tensions in New York, or a big drug bust in which Hispanic men are arrested, he asserts that people of color are portrayed in a disproportionately negative light or are excluded by "general" news media.

Equally straightforward is "Advertising: Frito Bandito to Power Master," also produced by Spectra.

Like "Racism," video and manual are designed to inform advertising executives and writers, as well as consumers, on how to monitor ads and products for racism.

"Advertising" points out the buying power of people of color, especially in the United States, and challenges advertisers to represent their customers fairly and equitably.

The video offers practical suggestions on monitoring, but also gives tips on troubleshooting. Several examples show ads that were removed from television because of negative reactions by particular groups.

Both videos will soon be available in 1991 from United Methodist Communications, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202.

Environmental racism draws UM conclave fire

United Methodist News Service

NEW YORK—The placing of unmonitored toxic waste sites in predominantly black and Hispanic communities is clear evidence of environmental racism, participants in the United Methodist Consultation on Environment and Sustainable Development were told recently.

Vernice Miller of the Center for Constitutional Rights said although she had done research for the United Church of Christ's study on toxic waste and race, "until I went to Louisiana and saw 'Cancer Alley' between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, I had never seen communities poisoned out of existence."

She added that, because of "hundreds of petrochemical, plastics and power plants," the rate of cancer there is 35 times the national average.

She described efforts of New York's West Harlem residents to combat a sewage-treatment plant, a marine transfer station and construction of a sixth bus depot in the area.

Ms. Miller addressed the first consultation on environmental issues sponsored by the Women's Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. Its purpose was to train women on sustainable development and prepare observers going to Brazil for the U.N. world summit on environment and development in June.

Participating were 15 women active in environmental issues and nominated by their United Methodist Women's (UMW) units, and Women's Division directors from committees on global education and peace, economic justice and constituency education.

Ellen Kirby of the Women's Division said the early preparation for a world summit and the inclusion of five Methodist women from the country where it will be held is a "unique design" for her organization.

The event was funded by the Centennial Offering of United Methodist Women.

The five Brazilian women addressing the consultation said their country has paid its international debt in natural resources extracted from Brazil by the industrial nations.

"Because of our debt, it is necessary for us to export our resources while two-thirds of our people go hungry," explained Loide Velasquez.

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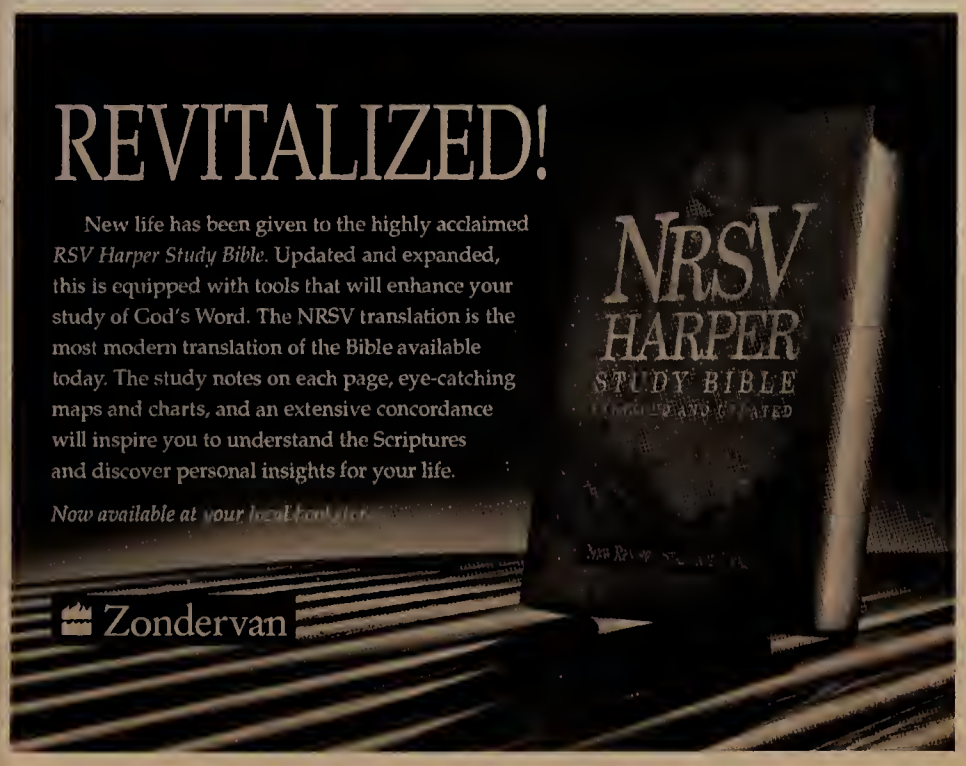

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THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace — Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor

Louisiana United Methodist
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Advent: A Hopeful Season Of Heralding And Healing

William B. Oden

Some despairing disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus. They asked the urgent message sent from John, "Are you he who is to come or shall we look for another?" In other words, is there any hope?

Jesus' answer was strange. He didn't say, yes I am or no, I'm not!

He said: "Go tell John what you hear and see: the blind have recovered sight, the lame walk, . . . the deaf hear, and the dying are raised up!"

Some despairing people came to Isaiah the prophet some 800 years earlier. They asked: Is there any hope?

Isaiah paints a verbal image. He "heralds" or proclaims a word of hope.

The desert shall rejoice.
The eyes of the blind shall be opened.
The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
The lame shall leap like a deer.
The waters shall hurst forth in the wilderness.

Thus Jesus was saying to the disciples of John: That which was heralded has come to pass. These are signs of God's deliverance.

We live in a cynical secular age. Miracles are reduced to the spectacular and are forgotten with tomorrow's headlines.

But signs of God's action in the coming of Christ abound.

The cup of cold water given to one who thirsts
The healing gentle touch
The sharing of bread
The caring for the unwanted.

Christmas is a word — heralding, but more than that, it's a sign — healing.

William B. Oden

Centenary College Choir Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The internationally-known Centenary College Choir, aptly named "America's Singing Ambassadors," celebrated its 50th anniversary in November at Shreveport's Civic Theater.

For this special event, held on Nov. 2 and 3, the 60-voice choir was joined by 400 alumni in a reunion performance sponsored by the Downtown Lions Club. Dr. Will Andress, the choir's director, stated that the response from the alums was far greater than he anticipated. Former members from as far away as Japan, England and Germany were on hand for the annual "Rhapsody in View Concert."

The Centenary Choir, formed in 1941 by Dr. A. C. "Cheesy" Voran, has weathered the ups and downs of college enrollment, wars and recessions to remain one of the premier college choirs in the nation. Over the years the choir has toured most of the United States and 25 foreign countries.

Among the highlights of the choir's foreign tours have been a special concert for the Swiss President and cabinet, the first Protestant choir to sing at St. Peter's in the Vatican, a visit to Russia and Poland at the time of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and several tours of military bases. Additionally, the choir has had two extended stays at Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

The choir has had three directors in its history: Dr. Voran, its founder who served until 1971; Dr. William Ballard, who served from 1972-3; and its current director, Dr. Will Andress. Dr. Andress is a former choir member.

Ms. Cynthia Lewis, choir alumna and former writer of the **Shreveport Times** is writing a history of the choir.

The 60-voice Centenary College Choir on the occasion of their 50th anniversary season.

Love Goes Out at Christmas

"Warm fuzzies" mean more than warm feelings at Shreveport's First United Methodist Church. Children there are encouraged to bring socks, mittens and caps to decorate a Christmas tree set up to supply warm clothing for the needy. Another "warm fuzzy" Christmas project at First Church is **Bring a Bear Sunday**, where members contribute teddy bears to accompany food baskets for the community's poor.

Creative outreach programs like these are sprouting throughout the Conference as congregations are inspired to spread the blessings of God's incarnation during the holiday season. Amid the traditional Hanging of the Greens, plays and cantatas, Advent Services and children's parties, United Methodists are gearing up to share Christ's birthday with members in the larger community.

Sunday school classes, like the "Pairs and Spares" at First United Methodist Church in Winnfield, are organizing Christmas Box drives for food and clothing, while the St. Andrew's Class at Metairie's Munholland United Methodist Church is sending a church-wide Christmas card in lieu of individual cards to save money which is donated to the Methodist Children's Home in New Orleans.

The youth of Jefferson United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge are baking cookies for shut-ins and taking the cookies with them when they visit these people at Christmas. Shreveport's First United Methodist Church's youth are selling Christmas wreaths and Blackwater's youth has a Memorial Christmas tree which will be lit up depending on the number of donations given in memory of loved ones. Both projects support mission work.

The United Methodist Women of First United Methodist Church in Houma sponsor a **Shoes for the Needy** drive and Noel's UMW (Shreveport) participates in an **Angel's Attic Christmas Bazaar** to raise funds for their work.

The members of Cornerstone in New Orleans are furnishing toys for the United Methodist Children's Home as are other churches in the area. Lake Vista "specializes" the drive for children's clothes by having a "Mitten Sunday" (another version of the Methodist "warm fuzzies.")

First United Methodist Church parishioners in Shreveport will not only collect food for the needy but will cook it and serve it in their annual **Christmas Love Feast** on Christmas eve.

As the Christmas carol says, "love came down at Christmas." Louisiana United Methodists joyfully add, "so that we might share it with everyone!"

Shreveport has successful school

On October 5th and 6th, thirty-six United Methodists attended the Lay Speaking Basic Course sponsored by the Shreveport District Council on Ministries; and Faith, Love Chapel, New Light, St. Paul, Shady Grove, Johnson Chapel and Wesley United Methodist Churches. The Course was taught by Dr. Selcy S. Collins. The Rev. G. L. Thomas was the host pastor.

Around the Conference

The children at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge, have collected a Mile of Pennies. They agreed to bring their pennies to contribute to the general fund of the church in order to learn about financial stewardship. It took approximately 18 months for the children to reach their goal. Participants in the project are shown with Mr. Bowen as he shares a good stewardship message. The children's next goal includes collecting A Year of Pennies to give to missions.

The First United Methodist Church of Logansport celebrated its centennial the weekend of October 26-27. It was founded in 1891. Bishop William B. Oden preached and served Holy Communion to 167 people in attendance for Sunday worship. He was assisted by their pastor Loretta Lampkin, former pastor John Williams, the Reverend Marie Williams, Board of Trustees Chairperson Gordon Russell, Lay Leader Dennis Freeman, new member Donnie Campbell and Organist Ann Russell.

Churches combine talents in gift of love. A dramatic presentation of the Christmas Cantata, **Son of the Highest**, (arranged by Dick Bolks/Drama by Paul M. Miller) was presented on December 8th and 9th in the Kentwood United Methodist Church sanctuary. This special gift of love was the result of the desire of four congregations — Kentwood, Mount Hermon, Tangipahoa and Pine Ridge — to perform a special ministry to the community. Each church contributed voices, youth and adult actors, sound equipment, costumes and countless hours of work as an outgrowth of their involvement in the Disciple Bible Study. Pastors of the churches are the Rev. Barbara Duke (Kentwood and Mount Hermon) and the Rev. Jeffrey Duke (Tangipahoa and Pine Ridge).

Louisiana Pastor Preaches at Saint Paul School of Theology. The Rev. Chris Andrews, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, recently preached at chapel at the Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri. He is a graduate of the School and serves on the Board of Trustees.

Dillard University Participates in the Educational Talent Search Project. Dillard University is participating in the federally-funded Educational Talent Search Project for the 1991-92 academic year. The program is designed to assist youths from 12-27 years of age in completing their high school education and pursuing post-secondary educational or training programs.

The major thrust of the Project is to provide information and pre-college counseling on educational options to individuals who have limited financial resources and parents who are not college educated. Applications, however, are provided to any student who resides in the Orleans or Jefferson Parishes. Contact Dillard University for further information.

The Conference Board of Discipleship Completes Workshop. During the month of September, Dr. John Savage of L.E.A.D. Consultants led a workshop on Conflict Management and Resolution. Five ways of managing conflict in the local churches were taught in the workshop.

Attention Pastors, Treasurers and Financial Secretaries

This is to remind you that the FINAL payments to 1991 apportionments and advance specials MUST be in BEFORE the Conference Finance Office closes its books on January 6, 1992. ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 6, 1992.

Notice to Conference

Medical/Dental Insurance Subscribers

The Conference Board of Pension Insurance Committee has acted favorably upon a recommendation from Employee Benefit Services, the third-party administrator of our self-funded insurance program, concerning the pre-certification aspect of our plan. The only effect the change will have on participants in the conference insurance program is that the telephone number to be called will be a different 800 number. A new identification card, which will have the new pre-certification telephone number, will be issued before the new year. It will be important for insurance subscribers to begin using the new card with the new pre-certification number on January 1, 1992.

We also have some very good news concerning insurance premium rates for 1992. The increase in premiums can be held to only 5%. The premium amounts will be as follows:

Family	$448.00
Single	$168.00
Medicare supplement	$ 75.00

Seminar on Church Consultants to be Held

A Seminar on the Role and Skills of the Church Consultant will be held on January 6-8, 1992, at Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital in New Orleans. It will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, June 6th and conclude at noon Wednesday, January 8th. The cost of $210 will include training materials, snacks and three meals in the cafeteria.

The Seminar, conducted by Dr. John Salvage, will enable church workers to understand the roles and competencies of the church consultant, will teach five major consultant models that can be used with any group, will assist leaders in creating and sustaining effective change and will identify and resolve organizational problems — not just the symptoms.

Registrations should be sent to Dr. Spiller Milton; P. O. Box 1064; Crowley, LA 70527. The $25 registration fee is due by December 15th.

Editorial

Hostages, violence and peace

The winding down of the Middle East hostage crisis, particularly last week's release of the longest-held hostage, American journalist Terry Anderson, is cause for rejoicing.

But the apparent end of this exercise in violence also is fitting cause for reflection during Advent.

The overall cost of the hostage ordeal is incalculable. Among other things, it provoked untold suffering for the individuals directly involved, their families and loved ones. And, lasting more than a decade, it injected a further explosive element into an already unstable Middle East situation.

Aside from individual stories of human courage and endurance—for example, the untiring efforts of Mr. Anderson's sister, Peggy Say, to secure his release—it is virtually impossible to point to anything good resulting from the hostage ordeal.

We believe the resulting lesson is both moral and practical:

Not only does might, expressed as the violent use of force, not make right. Such violence rarely resolves conflict but, rather, most often magnifies and/or perpetuates it.

Hostage-taking is, in fact, a microcosm of war or of any threat made against human life in order to promote personal, political or ideological aims. As such, the hostage crisis exposed in raw form both the evil of treating people as mere pawns and of the suffering that ripples outward into the lives of others as a direct result of such evil.

As Christians, we should be encouraged by evidence that increasing numbers of people are willing to renounce such behavior to achieve social, political and personal goals. The mostly non-violent overthrow of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union offers a prime example.

That revolution combined with reductions in the world's nuclear arsenal caused the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists recently to move back by several minutes its "doomsday clock" showing the world's hypothetical distance from destruction. The end of the hostage crisis merits moving it back another minute or so.

As we anticipate the birthday of the Prince of Peace, we should lift up such signs of God's activity that show peace and non-violence not only as moral ideals but as the most realistic ways to live in a conflict-wracked world.

At a minimum, we should offer prayers of thanksgiving that a cruel witness to the futility of violence is over and bid God's help to live as peace-making followers of Christ.

The winding down of the Middle East hostage crisis is a fitting cause for reflection during Advent on non-violence as both a moral ideal and a practical way of life.

Letters to the Editor

Church must be more than 'society of niceness'

According to a recent opinion expressed on the Faith Forum page, the tide of United Methodist decline can be stemmed by being more friendly (see UMR, Nov. 15).

It would seem that being nice should be raised to a doctrinal norm!

It is true enough that our parishes should be friendly places, but, if friendliness is the key to church growth, then we are offering little more than civic organization.

The church is called to teach the craft of discipleship, which means it is not where people gather for the warm fuzzies of "niceness" but for the serious task of being an alternative community.

As Robert R. Fejes wrote in the same Nov. 15 issue ("Here I Stand"), the church cannot be reduced to a society of niceness. The first task is to be the church, not a consumer item.

As my teacher, Methodist ethicist Stanley Hauerwas, put it in a lecture: "People who get together simply for the sake of being together is another name for hell . . . we're just not that interesting."

What is more interesting is the gospel we preach, the sacraments we celebrate, and the beliefs we hold that make us an alternative community to the world.

On the one hand, perhaps visitors should not expect instant warmth, but should become committed to the life of a congregation for the sake of becoming a disciple of Christ, not just a nice person, before judging it as unkind.

On the other hand, the gospel the congregation hears bids them to take in the stranger. Both are calls to authentic discipleship.

William McDonald
Nashville, Tennessee

Whose board is it?

You did not mention in a Nov. 8 Faith Connections article that the General Board of Global Ministries has 460 support staff in New York, out-numbering home missionaries by 152.

A related article notes that the board's Women's Division will team up with the Commission on the Status and Role of Women to offer "orientation" to women delegates to the 1992 General Conference. A more accurate description might well be "indoctrination," when all is said and done.

If this happens, surely it will be symptomatic of the lust for power harbored by some of the "leaders" in the denomination, using this means to promote their special interest, legislative agenda. It may be legal (by standards of the Book of Discipline), but it leaves a bad taste in my mouth.

For many years, a multitude of United Methodists have expressed dismay with policy directions of the Board of Global Ministries. Relocation might well offer new hope for change.

Let's support this recommendation. Give local churches self-determination by liberating the mission program from the entrenched establishment. The past has seen failed reform attempts through re-arranging the deck chairs. Now is the time to move the ship closer to home port, before it sinks in troubled waters.

Let those who want to stay in New York do so. Whose board is it, anyway? I say it belongs to the whole church, and needs to be in unity with the vision of common women and men in our pews and pulpits.

Dwight E. Martin
Selma, North Carolina

The editors reserve the right to edit, condense or reject any letters received.

Address letters for publication to "Letters to the Editor," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Pontius' Puddle

Here I Stand

It's time that white UMs accept our ethnic identity

By DAYTON S. SLOAT

Let us speak the truth: Congregations we often describe as "non-ethnic" are no such thing. They are, in fact, ethnic white midwestern churches.

Let us also speak the truth about our "ethnic minority churches." For our Hispanic and black conferences, integration into white conferences proved to be a tragic mistake with long-range consequences.

The attempt to graft black and Hispanic Methodism onto a white Methodist trunk cut these vital branches of the church off from their roots and caused them to wither and shrink.

Putting down own roots

The "ethnic minority" churches that are succeeding do so by putting down their own roots, parallel to conference and district structures.

Other, integrated ethnic minorities, such as Native Americans, Pacific Islanders and Filipinos, often exist as islands of ethnic tradition in a white context.

How ironic, then, that whites in Southern California where I live increasingly are living in islands of ethnic white traditions within a non-white context!

If we are among the ethnic white United Methodists, let us begin to accept who and what we are.

For example, most of us are uncomfortable with public expressions of our faith; we do not witness evangelically like the Baptists or Korean United Methodists.

Yet, although we may never say so, our faith has sustained us over the years. Attending worship is one of the precious constants in our lives and we willingly volunteer our hours to the congregations where we worship.

We crave stability

In a world that has changed dramatically, the church is, for us, an island of stability and one of the few places our word still counts. We crave stability and wish the world would stop changing so fast.

We long for the small-town life which we have left behind, where children grew up in safety, married their high school sweetheart, and raised their children in the same town where most of their family still lived.

We strive to be friendly, hard-working, and in control of our feelings. It takes us years to really open up to an acquaintance. All the same, we love to gossip and know everyone else's business (as in small towns).

At one level, we certainly know that our churches must adapt and change, but in our hearts we say "only over my dead body!" In our heads, we may rejoice when non-white congregations prosper and grow, but in our hearts we grieve that our own ethnic white churches decline year after year.

White brothers and sisters, let us admit that ours is an ethnic church and celebrate our ethnicity. Let us recognize that there is much of value in a white, European-American ethnic heritage and there are many to whom we can effectively minister.

But let us also recognize that we as white ethnic churches need self-consciously to plant, enable, and nurture new congregations that may never integrate with us or our ethnic roots.

Our forbears did it

We have not failed if they decide to go off on their own, buy their own property (or ours), and serve their particular needs. That's what our forebears did when they planted our churches!

Multi-culturalism for United Methodism seems to require multiple roots in a common bed of United Methodist Christian faith.

Let's allow God's seed to germinate and grow where God seems to be planting it. As ethnic whites, let us celebrate our own heritage and that of others as equally valid expressions of God's church in service to God's varied children.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which Reporter readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Dayton S. Sloat is a member of Bella Vista United Methodist Church in Monterey Park, Calif. (California-Pacific Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to "Here I Stand," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

What others are saying

"If we laypeople began to live our lives as ministry, we would cause all kinds of trouble, ask all kinds of questions and cause all kinds of miracles to happen."
—United Methodist laywoman Pat Callbeck-Harper, Helena, Mont.

* * *

"One of the difficulties with discernment is that when Christians discover God's work we are tempted to celebrate and praise God, but fail to act in response to our discovery. Discernment and doing cannot be separated. To *discern* without *doing* produces the occasion for apathy. To *do* without *discerning* produces the occasion for irresponsibility."
—Bishop Bruce P. Blake (Dallas Area).

My Witness

God can heal us spiritually if not physically

By JOY BRIDENBAUGH

I volunteer at Good Samaritan Hospital in Dayton, Ohio. I am part of a rather new program called APOP (activities program for older patients) in which we visit patients 70 years of age and older.

A gerontology clinical nurse specialist developed the program and guides volunteers in stimulating the minds and senses of older patients by offering ways to encourage them to recall the past, to identify with the present and to alleviate the monotony of hospitalization.

We offer large print reading materials, games, crafts, tape recordings of old radio comedies and visit kits with big pictures entitled, "How things have changed."

Sometimes only a listening ear is needed. Older patients have a wealth of experience to share and often I am overwhelmed with their life history, their humor and the strength they bring to me.

I also meet patients who have just been told they have a terminal illness and they ask why. At first I felt very inadequate in these situations, yet my concern for them has led me to ask them to think about and talk about the quality of their lifetime.

I say to them that for each of us there comes a time when physical healing may not be possible; however, spiritual healing can take place and this is more important. All of us have been given more blessings than we can count and when difficult times come we must remember the precious things in life for they can never be taken from us.

I will never forget a cancer patient whose case I followed through several months of chemo and radiation. In her last weeks after coming out of a coma I looked in on her, asked how she felt and her reply was, "God has been good to me and is always present. I cannot complain." In her total helplessness her faith never weakened and the presence of God continued to sustain her spirit.

I was reminded of the Lord's words to Israel found in Isaiah 43, "Don't be afraid, I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through great trouble, I will be with you. You are precious to me and honored and I love you."

God has promised to be with us in times of trial. When physical healing is not possible God renews our spirit and leads us through the valley of death to eternal life.

God's goodness and strength are shown to me through the suffering of others and for this experience I am thankful.

"My Witness" is a column through which Reporter readers may share meaningful experiences of the Christian life. Joy Bridenbaugh is a member of Phillipsburg UMC, Phillipsburg, Ohio (West Ohio Annual Conference).

Any reader may submit an article for consideration (two typed, double-spaced pages maximum length) to: "My Witness," United Methodist Reporter, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Nov. 29 answer: Isaiah 9:2)

Readings for week of Dec. 16

Monday: Isaiah 12:2-4
Tuesday: Isaiah 12:5-6
Wednesday: Zephaniah 3:14-15
Thursday: Zephaniah 3:16-20
Friday: Luke 3:7-14
Saturday: Luke 3:15-18
Sunday: Philippians 4:4-9

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

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Faith watch

SOVIET FOOD APPEAL: An appeal has been mailed to United Methodist pastors, asking local churches to contribute money and food parcels to an emergency food lift for the Soviet Union. The appeal comes from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which is coordinating the effort for the World Council of Churches. Monetary contributions can be made to the Soviet Food/Medical Crisis, UMCOR Advance No. 250375-4. More information is available from the UMCOR hot line, (800) 841-1235.

CHURCHES DISCUSS AIDS: The recent announcement by **Earvin "Magic" Johnson** that he tested positive with the HIV-virus has helped create interest in AIDS discussion groups in United Methodist Youth Fellowship groups throughout the connection. The "South Carolina Advocate" said Bethel United Methodist Church in Spartanburg, S.C., sponsored an AIDS forum at a local YMCA, funded by a donation from a Bethel member who died from the disease this year. At Virginia Wingard Memorial UMC in Columbia, S.C., a strong message was written on the church's "Dungeon" (UMYF meeting room) wall: "Remember: If you get AIDS you could disappear like 'Magic.'"

A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH: In a related story concerning Magic Johnson and the AIDS virus, a United Methodist minister in Houston said he hopes Mr. Johnson will give a "no-sex" message instead of promoting "safe-sex." The Rev. **Kirbyjon Caldwell**, pastor of Windsor Village United Methodist Church, told the "Houston Post" that "abstinence was a moral issue in the 1960s and 1970s. Abstinence in the 1990s or year 2000 will be a life-or-death issue." At least 100 people stood in line to be tested for the AIDS virus after a recent Sunday service at the Houseon church. Another free screening is scheduled for Dec. 15.

Kirbyjon Caldwell

'PRAYER FOR PEACE': "Concerned Christians of Hiroshima" sponsored a candlelight service on Dec. 8, at 2:55 a.m. as concrete actions of apology, reconciliation, and a prayer for world peace during the 50th Anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The service was scheduled to be held simultaneously with the ceremony being held at Pearl Harbor at 7:55 a.m. local time, and in connection with similar services of Asian reconciliation held by Christian churches in Hawaii. In a letter signed by Christian leaders in Hiroshima—including United Methodist missionary **Julie Todd** in Japan and the Rev. **Haruyoshi Fujimoto**, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Honolulu—the group asked that the attack on Pearl Harbor and the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki not be occasions for renewed hatred.

BISHOP NAMED TO NCC TEAM: United Methodist Bishop **James K. Mathews** (Albany, N.Y. Area), is one of six scholars and church leaders to represent the National Council of Churches in a meeting soon with leading Eastern Orthodox theologians to discuss those churches' future relationship with the NCC. Recently five of the council's nine Orthodox member communions decided to suspend participation in the ecumenical body. The NCC's six-person committee was named by the council's president, the Rev. **Leonid Kishkovsky**. Mr. Kishkovsky is also ecumenical officer for the Orthodox Church in America, one of five Orthodox communions which suspended membership in the NCC.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Spirits wounded by quake not yet healed

UMs find lingering effects of 1989 shock make painful reminders and signs of renewal

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.—White jagged edges of plaster contrast sharply with the dark gray exterior of the bust of the late seminary professor and author, Howard Thurman.

Yet the Rev. David Summers, pastor of Live Oak United Methodist Church, keeps the broken sculpture his mother created for him in honor of his religious mentor.

Mr. Summers used the broken sculpture to illustrate a children's sermon the Sunday after the 1989 earthquake knocked the bust from its shelf in his study.

He retains it to remind him that there are wounds from that catastrophe—in his town, in his congregation, and in himself—that are not yet healed.

Farther south, in the farming community of Watsonville, the Rev. F. Jerry Fox shows a visitor where concrete slabs have been installed to shore up the parsonage foundation cracked by the earthquake.

"That's the thing about earthquakes," Mr. Fox noted. "Sometimes it takes a while for the damage to show up."

The 1989 earthquake—named the Loma Prieta quake after the mountain peak near its epicenter—measured 7.1 on the Richter scale. It caused 62 deaths, 3,757 injuries, and more than $6 billion in structural damage. Recovery from the earthquake's effects is still under way more than two years later.

Both Mr. Summers and Mr. Fox know about lingering aftereffects. They have served for the past two years with interfaith disaster response groups in their respective communities.

Some of those aftereffects—like previously undetected cracks in foundations or in souls—have been painful reminders of the day the earth shook.

Some aftereffects, however, have become heartening symbols of renewal, like broken bones that knit back stronger than before.

Interfaith cooperation

In Watsonville, where a rebuilt downtown gleams in the late fall sunlight, Mr. Fox said the disaster response effort built upon a sturdy history of interfaith cooperation that had existed prior to the earthquake.

Mr. Fox said the ministerial association in Watsonville met every weekday morning for weeks to set up the interfaith disaster recovery committee.

"Hispanic people were most impressed that our churches were the ones to reach out most to them," he added. "We've had several services of blessing for rebuilt or 'rehabbed' homes. We showed them that's how Christians do things when they carry on, caring for the least."

As a result of Watsonville's quake recovery effort (see accompanying story), he continued, "a lot of people have come to see making bridges between our Anglo and Hispanic populations is a way of 'doing ministry' in the Christian church. I see our congregation as one of those bridges."

Not quite as well

In Santa Cruz, the recovery has not gone quite as well.

At the Pacific Garden Mall downtown, front-end loaders continue to remove debris and carry supplies around cordoned-off construction sites. Chain-link fences bear blunt signs that forbid trespassers.

Downtown remains a place that Gertie Johnson, a member of Live Oak United Methodist Church, said she "can't stand" to go.

"I feel like nothing has been done, even though the construction company my husband and I own is working on a parking lot there," she explained. "I see those gaping holes and I cry."

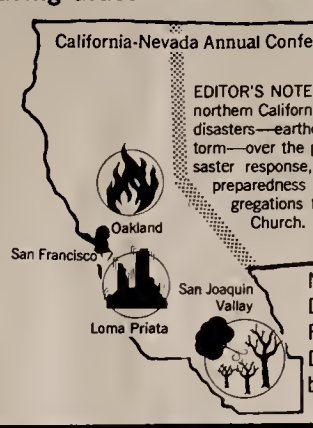
Her pastor, Mr. Summers, empathized.

"We've lost landmarks that define who we are," he said of Santa Cruz and its residents. "The spirit has been damaged and doesn't regenerate."

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.—The Rev. David Summers (right) and the Rev. John Corson hold Mr. Summers' broken sculpture that he retains as a memento of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Mr. Summers, pastor of Live Oak United Methodist Church, and Mr. Corson, superintendent of the San Jose district, have been active in interfaith earthquake recovery efforts.

Saving Grace: When Disaster Challenges Faith



EDITOR'S NOTE: United Methodists and others in northern California have endured four major natural disasters—earthquake, drought, freeze and firestorm—over the past two years. Their stories of disaster response, spiritual reassessment and risk preparedness offer significant witness for congregations throughout The United Methodist Church.

NEXT IN THE SERIES:
Dec. 20: San Joaquin Valley Freeze
Dec. 27: Disasters: Not IF, but WHEN?

Repetition of disasters impedes emotional recovery for victims

Reporter Staff Special

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.—Northern California's two-year siege of natural disasters has left its mark on residents.

The Rev. John Corson, superintendent of the San Jose district, told the Reporter that the most recent disaster—the Oakland firestorm in October—set off emotional reactions in earthquake victims as well.

"My wife is a professional therapist, and since the Oakland firestorm she has seen quite a bit of regression in her clients, especially some of the children," Mr. Corson noted.

The experiences provide a demanding ground for ministry, he added.

The Rev. David Summers, pastor of Live Oak United Methodist Church, agreed, adding, "You see compassion fatigue. Our CROP walk (an annual fund-raiser for Church World Service) was half its previous turnout the year after the quake."

Mr. Summers said his congregation has made a special effort to find ways "to have hope and celebration and thanksgiving" amid the lingering discomfort of their tragedy.

Thus on Oct. 17, memory and celebration were combined when the children in Live Oak's new day care program gathered outside at 5:04 p.m.—two years to the minute after the quake struck in 1989—to ring the church bell.

That and other moments of faith continue to mark the passage forward from the earthquake, said Mr. Corson.

"People outside the area forget very quickly what's going on," he said. "I'm more sensitive now; I know disasters go on for months."

Mr. Summers agreed. "I've learned just how long it takes for healing to happen."

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

Interfaith response cited as key to long-term relief

Reporter Staff Special

WATSONVILLE, Calif.—Vital to healing some damage caused by the 1989 earthquake were the interfaith disaster recovery groups in Santa Clara County, about 100 miles south of San Francisco.

Both groups in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, the county's two largest cities, have disbanded only within the past six months.

The Rev. F. Jerry Fox, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Watsonville, said his community's interfaith committee used a unique approach to earthquake recovery.

The coalition had a full-time, English/Spanish-speaking, 12-person staff, including about eight on a permanent building crew.

The building crew, augmented by 40 to 80 volunteers including Mennonites, Seventh-Day Adventists and members of the Reformed Church, "ran full tilt" from shortly after the earthquake until June this year, Mr. Fox said.

In combined materials and labor, the recovery group administered nearly $2 million in relief.

"In a lot of disasters, people get direct grants to rebuild," Mr. Fox explained. "What we did was to use the grants to do the work; then the families would repay us for the materials. The labor was free, so we could keep turning the money around."

Although the interfaith group has disbanded, it fostered two ongoing community projects—a new multimillion-dollar Habitat for Humanity program and a bilingual low-cost housing coalition known as the October 17 Committee.

The Habitat for Humanity project is being started with $50,000 in "seed money" from the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

The housing committee, serving as both contractor and financier for a low-cost housing development, has been granted the remaining funds from the interfaith earthquake recovery group. Some of those proceeds also originated through UMCOR.

In Santa Cruz, District Superintendent John Corson lauded UMCOR emergency grants as "the money that leverages other relief funds."

Part of the $1.4 million in United Methodist aid that came to Santa Cruz, he said, helped the interfaith recovery project there create a disaster-response manual he calls "the best manual United Methodist money has ever produced."

Mr. Corson and the Rev. David Summers, pastor of Live Oak United Methodist Church in Santa Cruz, said the value of United Methodism's connectional relationships for effective interfaith disaster recovery projects was emphasized many times during the quake recovery.

"Non-connectional churches gave immediate response, but it was the interfaith effort, supported by United Methodists, that was still at work a year and a half later," Mr. Summers said.

"We sustained a major effort helping those who fell through the cracks of federal aid."

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

Homosexuality study forwarded to 1992 General Conference

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—Results of an unprecedented 2½-year study on homosexuality and the relationship of homosexual people to The United Methodist Church are on their way for consideration by the church's policymaking 1992 General Conference.

Directors of the General Council on Ministries voted 73 to 18 last week to "receive and refer"—but not to endorse—the 32-page report of the Committee to Study Homosexuality.

The report now goes to the General Conference May 5-15 in Louisville, Ky.

The study was forwarded with one minor change after nearly a day of worship, study panelists' presentations and parliamentary maneuvering over the report's contents.

History in the making

An almost palpable sense of church history in the making surrounded the proceedings.

The Rev. Jonathan D. Keaton of Naperville, Ill., a member of the churchwide program coordinating council, set the tone for the day's events in his opening sermon.

He likened Christ's spiritual turmoil before his crucifixion to United Methodists' turmoil over the issue of homosexuality.

"Christ solved his dilemma by putting God first," Mr. Keaton said. "Some feel this could be our most decisive moment since our past struggles on slavery. Let us seek to do God's will, more than the will of our diverse constituencies."

Representatives of the 24-member study committee then presented a 3½-hour explanation of their process and findings on the biblical, theological, ethical, scientific and experiential aspects of homosexual people and their relationship to The United Methodist Church.

The study panel's presentation—which many GCOM directors in later discussions described as an informative and deeply moving account—was marked by expressions of respect and appreciation for one another and for the committee's process.

Differences remain

At the same time, study panelists acknowledged frankly that deep differences of opinion still exist among them over the acceptability of homosexual behavior and the church's appropriate response to such behavior.

Council on ministries directors, who appeared attentive during the morning presentation, had few questions of the panel when proceedings resumed in the afternoon.

Instead, directors turned their energies to attempting amendments of the motion to forward the report to the General Conference. The referral motion was made by the Rev. Nancy Yamasaki of Seattle, Wash., who chaired the study committee and is a GCOM director.

A major amendment was attempted by another elected GCOM director, the Rev. Reginald Ponder of Lake Junaluska, N.C., staff executive for the church's nine-state Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Dr. Ponder proposed to remove the report's recommendations for churchwide study and for changes in the Social Principles, the denomination's collection of statements on social issues.

In their place, Dr. Ponder proposed this statement: "In light of this study, the General Council on Ministries sees no need to modify Paragraph 71F of the Social Principles or add new paragraphs relating to the rights of persons affected by their human sexuality."

Amendment supported

Harold Nixon, a member of the coordinating council and a layman from Abilene, Texas, supported Dr. Ponder's amendment.

Mr. Nixon asserted that the committee's report was biased and cited more than 1,400 letters to the council favoring retention of the church's current stance. That stance holds homosexual practice to be incompatible with Christian teaching.

Bishop Judith Craig (Michigan Area) spoke forcefully against the Ponder amendment. She affirmed the value of sending to General Conference both the minority recommendation that would retain the church's current stance and the majority recommendation that would change it.

"Both proposed changes to Paragraph 71F of the Social Principles have powerful language of truth-telling about the reality of our situation as the people of God on this issue," Bishop Craig asserted.

"To take away that elegant truth-telling takes away a moment of opportunity for witness."

The Rev. Jerome K. del Pino of Boston also opposed the Ponder amendment.

'Our church needs light'

"Our church needs light and not heat on this issue," he said. "I'm not in accord with everything in this report, but I'm committed to seeing it through to the context [of General Conference] where real decision-making occurs."

After GCOM directors voted to receive and refer the report with virtually no amendments, Bishop Craig proposed—and directors approved—sending audio tapes of the study panel's explication of the report to heads of delegations which will represent all of the church's regional bodies at the General Conference.

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Faith connections

NEWSLETTERS ON TV: United Methodist Reporter Managing Editor **John A. Lovelace** will be among on-air "teachers" March 3 when United Methodist Communications and the Religious Public Relations Council present a nationwide teleconference on congregational newsletters. The 90-minute teleconference (1-2:30 p.m. Central Time) will be produced in Nashville and beamed live to at least 30 downsites across the nation. Other on-camera "teachers" will include **Wesley (Pat) Pattillo**, vice president for university relations at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and national president of RPRC; **Wendy Ryan**, director of communications for the Baptist World Alliance headquartered in McLean, Va.; and **Jacqueline (Jackie) Steck**, a Roman Catholic who teaches public relations at Temple University in Philadelphia.

SAVING GRACE: The Meadows Foundation, one of the largest in Texas, has given $240,000 to replace the original 1903 wiring in Grace United Methodist Church, Dallas. The church, a founding partner in the eight-congregation East Dallas Cooperative Parish, is in a $2 million building restoration campaign. A Meadows Foundation official said that the grant is an affirmation of the church's "community ministry." Grace is one of six inner-city United Methodist congregations in Dallas serving changing neighborhoods with wide-ranging economic, racial and cultural diversity.

OUTREACH CHAIR: United Methodist laywoman **Maria Otero** has been elected chair of Bread for the World's board of directors. A native of Bolivia, Ms. Otero heads the Washington office of Acción International. During her 15 years in international development, primarily in Latin America, she has been involved in women's development, human rights and microenterprise among poor people. "The selection of this talented woman is an exciting development for the future of the movement," said the Rev. **David Beckmann**, Bread for the World president who recently succeeded the Rev. **Arthur Simon**.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Interim chief executive named for UMR

National search for successor begins; development efforts affirmed, accelerated

By JOHN A. LOVELACE
Managing Editor

Two policymaking bodies of The United Methodist Reporter made personnel and financial decisions last week related to the recent death of the Reporter's editor and chief executive, the Rev. Spurgeon M. Dunnam III (see UMR, Dec. 6).

Daniel J. Louis

The executive committee of the Reporter's governing board, meeting via telepone conference call, designated the Rev. Daniel J. Louis Jr. as the organization's interim chief executive.

Mr. Louis, an ordained member of the Texas Annual Conference, will continue as UMR's general manager, a position he has held for two years. Before that he was director of operations and, before that, an associate editor. He joined the staff in 1980.

The executive committee also launched the search for a permanent chief executive to succeed Dr. Dunnam, who had headed UMR since 1969.

The Rev. Lycurgus Starkey, governing board chairman, said a national search will be conducted by the board's executive committee.

The 45-member governing board will be expected to nominate a person for election by the United Methodist Communications Council of Texas and New Mexico. That council represents the organization's seven owner annual conferences within the two states.

Another policymaking body related to the Reporter, the UMR Foundation board of trustees, conducted its regularly scheduled semi-annual meeting Dec. 4-5.

This board is seeking to raise an initial $4.2 million to build and permanently endow the maintenance of a new headquarters to be known as the UMR Communications Center.

The UMR Foundation board learned that pledges and cash on hand as of Nov. 30 exceed $2.3 million toward the $4.2 goal.

Last July the Mabee Foundation of Tulsa approved a challenge grant of $500,000 if the remaining $1.5 million can be secured in cash and pledges by July 9, 1992.

UMR Foundation board members restated their determination to meet that goal. A second-mile pledge effort among board members last week pushed their commitment to the campaign beyond $1.3 million.

Foundation trustees approved a development plan under the theme "We've a Story to Tell . . ." which concentrates on the seven United Methodist annual conferences in Texas and New Mexico which constitute the organization's legal ownership.

UMR Foundation trustees also expressed appreciation for gifts to the foundation made in memory of Dr. Dunnam and appreciation to his widow, Dottie Dunnam, for designating the foundation as the recipient of memorial gifts.

The Rev. Sanford Coon, an ordained clergy member of the Southwest Texas Annual Conference, continues as the foundation's president.

Cooperative parish exhibited as model for church's future

United Methodist News Service

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The rapidly growing cooperative parish movement is a major model for the church in the future.

This was the clear message received by 400 participants in the Third National Consultation on Cooperative Parish Ministries Nov. 21-24, sponsored by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries' National Division.

The parish ministry movement is driven by commitment to church and community renewal and a goal of serving the spiritual, social and economic needs of communities by coordinating the efforts of all churches in a given area.

Such ministries are often ecumenical and involve partnerships with non-church agencies.

Nearly 1,200 cooperative ministries—with an average of 10 congregations involved—include some United Methodist local church participation, according to Harold McSwain, director of a rural ministries center in Columbus, Ohio.

These numbers suggested that as many as a third of the denomination's 39,000 local congregations may be involved in cooperative ministries in their communities.

The movement is expanding in both rural and urban areas, said Gladys Campbell, a pioneer in cooperative parish ministry and National Division executive for town and country work.

The Rev. Frank Dorsey, pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church in Prairie Village, Kan., said cooperative-style ministries can be a "conceptual framework" for all Christian ministry.

Because the model views the church as a point from which to identify individual needs and build community, he recommends it for large churches as well as small ones.

Participants in 21 working groups reported the overarching need to teach laypeople and clergy the theology of cooperating in ministry.

The working groups also debated long-range implications of interchurch or ecumenical ministries on the salary structures of annual conferences.

Life savings go poof as church organ burns

By WILLMAR THORKELSON
Religious News Service

One day recently, when G. Ernest Galbraith took part of his life savings and made a final payment on a $100,000 pipe organ, he fulfilled his obligation to a long-time dream.

But the dream, an organ donated to the memory of his family, had a cruelly short life.

The Sunday before Mr. Galbraith made that last payment—less than two days after he had heard the organ played for the first time—the instrument was destroyed in a fire at the United Methodist Church in Mora, Minn.

The fire broke out early that Sunday, apparently in the furnace room below a recent addition housing the organ loft.

Part of the organ fell into the furnace room and is probably irreparable, according to the Rev. Marvin Repinski, pastor.

The new instrument was "one of the nicest-sounding organs I've ever heard," said Mr. Galbraith, who is an organist. He began playing organ when he was in the seventh grade for Sunday evening services in his father's church.

Mr. Galbraith used his life savings as a school teacher to buy the memorial to his parents, his sister and himself at the Minnesota church.

Church's general-council members visit Native American ministries

United Methodist News Service

CHEROKEE, N.C.—"The meat's here!"

That word, whispered into the sanctuary of Cherokee United Methodist Church on a crisp autumn evening, aroused the curiosity of members of a visiting team from the denomination's General Council on Ministries.

It also helped set the stage for one of a dozen visits to Native American ministries across the nation by council members.

When the Rev. Pat Freeman explained that the meat had arrived to be prepared for the United Methodist Men's semi-annual barbecue the next day, the visitors learned how a Native American mission church is itself in mission.

Mr. Freeman, a Muskogee Creek, was appointed to the church this past summer from Kansas, the first Native American pastor of this church in 50 years.

After having been cooked through the night over hickory wood in giant steel drums, the pork, with accompanying victuals, was sold to parishioners and townspeople with proceeds going to send the men to places such as Haiti for volunteer missions projects.

On this Saturday, about 200 meals were served and an estimated $1,200 raised for future projects.

On the other hand, the Cherokee church, where about 75 percent of the 228 members are Native Americans, counts on at least $30,000 annually from the denomination's Advance Special program to meet its $113,000 budget. That Advance income has declined in recent years.

Delmar Robinson, a black member of the congregation who is finance chairman and holds several other key positions, told the visitors, "We can't cut back on ministry—we have a lot of faith."

He had stayed up all night superintending barbecue operations.

Tom Queen, the community worker at the Cherokee church and one of the best known Native Americans in the denomination, recounted for the visitors the 170 years of Methodist ministry in the region.

The "old mission," forerunner of today's congregation, was established in 1830, eight years before the federal government dispatched most of the Cherokee nation along the "trail of tears" to Oklahoma.

Later in the visit, council members from across the county met other members of the congregation, legend teller Jerry Wolfe and the associate pastor, the Rev. Diane Stanton-Rich; visited Native American ceremonial grounds; examined the nine buildings making up the mission; and toured the 56,000 acres held by the Cherokee in what is known officially as the Qualla Boundary of the Eastern Band of Cherokees.

Other council members visited such places as Four Corners United Methodist Church in Buffalo, N.Y.; All Nations Church in Aberdeen, S.C.; and Native American ministries in Seattle and Shiprock, N.M.

The churchwide coordinating council set up the team visits to meet and get to know more fully Native American people and ministries and their contributions within the United Methodist Church; to develop an awareness of the political, social, economic and religious climate affecting Native American peoples and to enter into dialogue with them.

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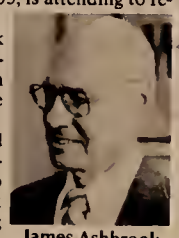
How about religious angle to coffee break?

By KATHLEEN SCHWAR
Religious News Service

During a fitful night, James Ashbrook will glance at the clock. Sure enough, it is usually about 90 minutes from the last glance. He is reassured that he has been minding his soul.

If, during the day, he finds himself fading, he makes it a point to close his eyes or take a nap. Again, Dr. Ashbrook, 65, is attending to religious needs.


James Ashbrook

Dr. Ashbrook even has a religious angle on the coffee break.

"We need spaced-out periods of time to assimilate what has been going on," he said.

"If you don't stop and put it together, you have no character, no soul, no memory, no future."

Writing 13th book

On an extended break as a professor from United Methodist-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., Dr. Ashbrook is writing his 13th book, tying together religion and the neurosciences.

These are exciting times for him, when his decades of research into religion and the brain are coming together.

Dr. Ashbrook maintains that Sabbath—the regular rest period called for in the Bible—is built into every human being as part of an ongoing activity and rest cycle that researchers pin down to every 90-120 minutes.

The purpose of a Sabbath, he has concluded, is time for building one's soul.

In contrast to the ancient philosophical notion of "soul" as an entity in itself, Dr. Ashbrook gives its definition a contemporary twist.

"The soul is not some abstract, philosophical idea and not the disembodied entity that tended out of Greek tradition," he said.

Rather, he believes, "soul" is a combination of experienced reality and meaningful memory.

Sabbaths, short or long breaks in daily routine, Dr. Ashbrook concludes, are needed to give context to experience and memories. In short, they create "soul."

Keeping the Sabbath, creating soul, goes on effortlessly during night time REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, Dr. Ashbrook says.

During the day, it takes more effort.

Day off helps

"When you fade off during the day, go with it," is his advice. "It will help you develop a good memory, a meaning of self. Instead of pressing on, respond to your body and take a breather."

Coffee breaks have institutionalized such breathers, he noted.

An ordained American Baptist, Dr. Ashbrook has been recognized by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, the Alumni Association of the Institutes of Religion and Health, "Who's Who in Theology and Science" and "Who's Who in America."

Formerly a professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, N.Y., he began studying the brain at the University of Rochester and with Rollo May at the William Alanson White Institute in New York.

Dr. Ashbrook believes he is the first to relate biochemical rest periods to the traditional concept of the Sabbath.

The biblical commandment, "Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy," falls appropriately in the list of Ten Commandments between those that speak of relation to God and those that speak of human relationships, Dr. Ashbrook said.

Symbolically, then, Sabbath links heaven and earth, he said.

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The United Methodist REPORTER

Is it televangelism or is it fraud?

ABC expose' uncovers how TV tactics belittle genuine faith of evangelicals

By RANDALL BALMER
Religious News Service

Commentary

From our first look at Dallas evangelist W. V. Grant, we could tell that something was wrong. Something was very wrong.

For some months I had been receiving letters from Mr. Grant—"Dear Brother Randall," they began—inviting me to attend his revival meetings in New York City.

I relayed the offer to students in one of my classes, and on a rainy Wednesday evening a phalanx of us university types made our way to the ballroom of the Roosevelt Hotel.

As we milled around the book tables before the start of the service, the attendants there seemed inordinately solicitous, asking many questions.

The service began with several appeals for money, including a heart-rending pitch for orphanages that Mr. Grant runs in Haiti.

Centerpiece was healing

The centerpiece of the service, however, was healing. Mr. Grant walked up to members of the audience, seemingly at random, placed his fingers on forehead of an individual and then announced that the person standing before him had arthritis or gout or curvature of the spine or whatever.

"Do you believe that Doctor Jesus can heal you?" Mr. Grant asked each person and bellowed a brief prayer. The "patient" then declared herself healed and ran up and down the aisle triumphantly as the audience applauded.

We watched this for the better part of an hour, then decided to leave. Mr. Grant, I'd noticed, had been regarding us with suspicion, and he made a snide comment as we left to the effect that we couldn't bear to be in the presence of such a remarkable work of God. Outside, we shook our heads and decided that what we had just witnessed was, in all likelihood, pure chicanery.

The ABC News program "Prime Time Live" showed us why. An undercover investigation revealed Mr. Grant's methods.

According to the television program, some of those he "heals" are plants. He is able to "discern" maladies because he is fed information by surrogates who have quizzed people before the service. Sometimes he even "heals" people of afflictions they don't suffer.

"Prime Time Live" went on to expose the works of two other Dallas-based televangelists.

Larry Lea broadcast an impassioned appeal for money after his home in Oklahoma had apparently burned down. Mr. Lea, however, had reportedly been trying to sell the house for some time, and he and his family had already moved into a palatial, multi-million-dollar estate outside of Dallas.

I can't say that I was surprised at the third exposé. Robert Tilton, prophet of the prosperity gospel, runs a highly secretive organization, but one that takes in staggering sums of money—sometimes more than half a million dollars a day.

"Prime Time Live" interviewed one of Mr. Tilton's friends from college who chose to disguise his identity but recounted how he and Mr. Tilton would pretend to talk like evangelists—"Thank you, JEEE-sus!"—in a way that sounds disarmingly like Mr. Tilton today.

What's the message?

What's the message in all this? One hopes, of course, that the harsh glare of "Prime Time Live" will dry up the sources of money so that these preachers will wither and fade away like Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart. But some desperate, trusting souls are sure to keep sending money.

The real tragedy of such presentations is that it belittles the genuine faith and piety of millions of American evangelicals.

In the course of writing a book about grassroots evangelicalism several year ago,, I spoke with hundreds of people who expressed embarrassment and dismay at television preachers. What wounded these believers most is the way their faith and beliefs were equated by non-evangelicals with the antics of the televangelists.

That, the evangelicals insisted, was patently unfair.

The televangelists represent virtually no one—except, of course, themselves.

GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES PHOTO BY JOHN C. GOODWIN

'And an angel stood by'

SANTIAGO, Chile—Like the angel described in Zechariah 3:5, this little angel "stands by" but, unlike a seraph, seizes the opportunity to satisfy her sweet tooth with a lollypop while waiting for her cue in Santiago's annual Christmas pageant. Thousands of other little angels like her will appear in similar pageants around the world this Christmas season.

Review

'Black Robe' depicts pilgrim's arduous journey

By HILEY H. WARD

The movie, "The Black Robe," is a kind of journey through adversity.

It follows a lone, black-robed French Jesuit priest who wanders and stumbles and suffers through a trail of visually staggering hurdles. He seeks a saintly course with its spiritual rewards, much like Christian in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," a 17th Century allegory of staying on a pure and righteous course.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN COMPANY PHOTO

The grandeur of God's creation overshadows the arduous Canadian journey of a Jesuit missionary, Father Laforgue (Lothaire Bluteau, center), in the film, "Black Robe."

As such, "The Black Robe" is more harsh wilderness travelogue than drama.

Plodder and survivor

The black-robed Jesuit, with a broad-brim Roman black hat to match, is saintly enough. Played by Lothaire Bluteau, who won acclaim for his role as a suffering Messiah in "Jesus of Montreal," he's a plodder and a survivor.

Like a chiseled statue out of a rigid Jesuit mold, there is little doubt about the commitment of Father Laforgue (Bluteau), and little interest in him as a person.

Always immersed in his Latin breviary, the man of God offers little spark of drama. The audience sticks with this cardboard figure to see if he survives—and also to see what horrible torture he might endure.

Some grisly tortures and deaths are discussed and planned by the Iroquois who capture Father Laforgue and his Algonquin guides, but the viewer is spared graphic detail.

Yet director Bruce Beresford, who made the gentler, Oscar-winning "Driving Miss Daisy," creates an unrelenting harshness in the landscape of cliffs and frozen wilderness filmed along the Canadian Saguenay River, doubling for the St. Lawrence of a more pristine era.

1,500-mile trek

Father Laforgue sets off in 1634 from the town of Quebec by canoe with a young French interpreter, Daniel (Aden Young), who has some aspirations to be a priest.

His group, including the Indian guides, is on a 1,500-mile trek to a new mission to the Hurons.

There is a bit of soap opera in the forbidden romance that develops between Daniel and the Algonquin Indian chief's daughter, Annuka, played by Sandrine Holt. She seems out of place in a wilderness role, having been previously a top model for European fashion magazines such as "Elle" and "Italian Vogue." Like "Dances With Wolves," the love interest seems contrived.

Yet also as in "Dances With Wolves," Brian Moore's screen adaptation of his novel treats the Indians with respect. Indians speak their own languages (with subtitles). Yet they're not quite as saintly as in the Kevin Costner epic.

Unlike "Dances With Wolves," however, the actors are not divided into groups of all bad (all white people except the Kevin Costner character and his rustic lady friend) and good (the main Indian tribe).

In this movie, the Jesuit and the Indians merely pursue objectives: the Jesuit, conversion; the Indians, survival. Neither leaves much room for melodramatic encounters of good versus evil.

Don't wait for this one on video. Go see it on the big screen. Its territory compares with the overpowering scenes from the 1986 film, "The Mission," which won an Oscar for best cinematography.

With the existential loneliness of the driven priest Laforgue, dwarfed in a canoe, with his entourage, seen as specks from high cliffs, with the majesty of a red sunset and reflecting waters, an appreciation of the presence and awesomeness of God takes over. This is a movie about creation and landscape.

Dr. Ward of Philadelphia is a frequent reviewer for the Reporter.

International House gives students Christmas witness

By LINDA FREEMAN

During the Christmas break a college campus can be a very lonely place. At many schools students who remain on campus are forced to leave familiar dorm rooms and relocate in one designated residence hall. Most who can't go home are international students.

Recognizing their plight in the fall of 1962, Pete Peterson approached colleges and universities in his area and offered Christmas break accommodations at the University of South Carolina-Columbia to international students.

"That first year 25 or so came from six or seven states," says Mr. Peterson.

He estimates that in the years since then, Christmas International House has demonstrated to more than 35,000 students the real meaning of Christmas.

This year, 47 communities, from Massachusetts to Texas to Florida to California will offer fun, fellowship and relaxation with American families and other international students to more than 800 students.

Locally designed programs

Each program is designed and carried out locally. Some groups host as many as 100 students, some as few as five or ten; some house students together in one location, others invite students into their own homes.

Churches frequently participate. For instance, the Rev. Bill Reese, a United Methodist pastor in Cuba, Mo., encourages participation in Christmas International House.

"It is a wonderful ministry to persons who are visitors in our country and it a wonderful ministry to our own congregations as well," he said.

In addition to the warmth of fellowship, most communities also share with students those things that make their area unique.

According to statistics published by the Institute of International Education, 350,000 of the world's eventual national leaders—prime ministers, cabinet ministers, educators, politicians, scientists—are studying in the U.S.

Perplexing sights, sounds, customs, idioms, mannerisms and personalities are apt to make them very homesick and lonely. Statistics show that nine out of 10 of these students will never have an opportunity to visit in an American home.

The Christmas House International invitation is open to all international students age 18 or over attending college in the U.S. Interested students are sent a brochure listing sponsoring communities for the year and outlining each program from which they are asked to choose three.

Students pay some fees

Cheryl Atteberry of Fulton, Ga., national coordinator of the Christmas International House program, says students pay a small registration fee and are expected to pay their own way to and from the host location as well as for any personal expenses and for certain predetermined activities.

In addition to warm hospitality, hosts are expected to furnish a place to stay, frequent (but not constant) activities and most meals.

"Theologically," said Mr. Peterson, the founder, "we're responding to God's call to welcome strangers into our midst; we're practicing peacemaking, especially among those who come from nations at odds, by learning how easy it is to love an 'enemy' one-on-one; and we're giving Christmas witness by providing room at our inns."

For more information about the Christmas International House program, contact: Cheryl Atteberry P.O. Box 764, Tucker, Ga. 30085-0764, telephone 404/938-4291

Ms. Freeman is a free-lance writer in Charlotte, N.C.

History of Hymns

Minister's carol recalls site of Jesus' birth

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

By WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

On the day before Christmas in 1865, Phillips Brooks, a young minister from Philadelphia, was in Jerusalem. On horseback, he rode to Bethlehem, through the streets of the village, and to the nearby fields, the traditional site where the shepherds heard the heavenly hosts announce the birth of Jesus.

Mr. Brooks was enjoying a year's travel away from his pulpit of Philadelphia's Holy Trinity Church.

After he returned from his trip abroad, still long before Brooks became nationally famous, he wrote the stanzas of this hymn for the children of his Sunday school to sing at an Christmas program.

Later Mr. Brooks moved to Boston's Trinity Church and became recognized as one of America's outstanding preachers.

His published sermons are found in theological libraries, but his Christmas hymn appears in hymnals everywhere, in English and in many other languages.

In 1891 Brooks was elected Episcopal bishop of Massachusetts, a position he held briefly until his unexpected death on Jan. 23, 1893.

The music we sing to Brooks's hymn was composed by Lewis Redner, organist at his church. In addition to his musical responsibilities, Redner served 19 years as superintendent of the Sunday school.

First published in 1874, the Christmas hymn became increasingly popular. Now, more than a century later, the collaboration of an Episcopal minister and his church's organist is standard fare in our Christmas singing.

NEXT WEEK'S HYMN:
"The First Nowell"

Dear Deborah

Where is God amid world's troubles?

Dear Deborah,

I am overwhelmed with the hungry, the homeless, the abused and the victimized in our world. How can one person ever begin to hope to make a difference? Where is God today?

—David

Dear David,

You speak for a lot of people. I believe that the individualism in our society is like an infection that is eating away at our lives. We really cannot do much on our own about these huge problems.

To me, this is a good reason for the church. The church is not about individualism or even individual families but about community, about all working together to make a difference.

But of course a church is individuals. Christians who have a growing relationship with God still need to understand that we cannot be related to God on our own but only in community.

A church cannot do everything, but if a few people in a church catch a vision of the need and the possibility that they can do one thing, little by little things can be overcome.

God is there whenever people join together to bring about help, justice and compassion.

I would like to hear from readers about their churches and how big problems have been whittled down by Christians working together!

Readers are invited to write to Deborah for answers to personal problems in living the Christian life and faith. Make the letter brief. Questions for the column will be selected from the letters. Write "Dear Deborah, PERSONAL," P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Seeking roots amid change

By WARNER A. HUTCHINSON
Religious News Service

Commentary

There's a place of wonder in a converted barn on a narrow two-lane road in Pennsylvania Dutch country.

The attraction is "collectibles."

Scores of vendors have stalls inside this sprawling marketplace. Each vendor specializes. One sells only beer cans of brands long vanished; another only Kewpie dolls. Another sells ads clipped from popular magazines published in the '20s and '30s; still another kitchen utensils from the '30s and '40s. Even stuff from the '60s is entering the collectibles stream.

What draws hundreds of people to this marketplace every weekend? Why such great interest in all this junk from the past?

The answer is simple: these things provide tangible links to one's own past—real or imagined. They give a sense of continuity to a time that is remembered as more solid and real in a world that today seems to be mostly image.

Just touching these things is a demonstration of our endless need for roots in this time of dizzying change.

Mr. Hutchinson, of Coral Gables, Fla., is former general secretary of the American Bible Society.

Children's Homes Offering Sunday December 22, 1991

Louisiana Methodist Children's Home

Louisiana Methodist Children's Home is owned by the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and is governed by a Board of Directors who are elected by the Louisiana Annual Conference. It is licensed as a residential child care agency by the Louisiana Office of Human Development and is a Child, Youth and Family Care Member of the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries.

Our Ministry is Crucial

"Louisiana Methodist Children's Home seeks to minister to the diverse needs of Louisiana's children and families experiencing stress, brokenness and other special circumstances. The Children's Home seeks to do this by offering a variety of services to promote personal growth and wholesome family life. This ministry is patterned after the example of Jesus who ministered to the total person in order that each individual might experience the wholeness that comes through the reconciling love of God."

Board of Directors

Inquiries Welcome

Methodist Children's Home welcomes all inquiries concerning its services. Staff members are available for speaking engagements before interested groups. Individuals and groups are welcome to visit us on Hwy. 167 South in Ruston.

To schedule speaking engagements or visits, call during office hours at (318) 255-5020, FAX (318) 251-3639 or write Post Office Box 929, Ruston, Louisiana 71273-0929.

Methodist Home Of New Orleans

Identity

In the heart of the inner city of New Orleans, Methodist Home lives out its mission to serve abused, abandoned, and neglected children. Over 75% of reported cases of child abuse in Louisiana come from an 80 mile radius of The Home.

Mission

MORE THAN BONES ARE BROKEN when a child is abused. There is a bruising of Spirit and a fracturing of Will. Therefore, The Home's ministry is a holistic; physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. The building at 815 Washington Avenue houses 37 beds for residential care and treatment. Under this umbrella, Therapeutic Foster Care serves another 60 children.

Need

Gifts to Methodist Home expand services, enable outreach to greater numbers of children, provide competent staff, and maintenance of aging facilities. With your help, needy children will not only survive, but **THRIVE.**

Posters Available

Requests have been received for unfolded copies of the Mother's Day posters that are suitable for framing.

Some requests have come from churches, some from individuals. Individuals use them in their home at the birth of a first child or a grandchild; others have been gifts to parents or friends.

A limited number of both the Mother's Day and the new Christmas poster are available unfolded and if requested signed by the artist. There is a charge of $3.00 to cover the cost of packaging and postage.

If you want a copy of one or both write:

August E. Aamodt
Director of Development
P.O. Box 929
Ruston, La. 71273-0929

Louisiana Methodist Children's Home Christmas Offering

JOY TO THE WORLD!

WE BRING JOY TO YOUNG LIVES

New Orleans, Louisiana
Ruston, Louisiana

TWO FOR TWO!

There are TWO offerings for TWO Children's Homes at Christmas and Mother's Day each year.

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ANNIE T MUNDAY LIBRARY
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LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST

CELEBRATE AND WITNESS
Celebrate God's Grace – Witness for Jesus Christ
edition

William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor
Louisiana United Methodist
527 North Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

NUMBER 30 Send P.O. Form 3579 to P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 DECEMBER 20, 1991

Christmas Giving: My Priorities

William B. Oden

My mail is full of opportunities to give. My phone sounds almost like a continual Christmas bell ringing out opportunities to share Christmas blessings. Indeed, Christmas giving is almost like a campfire. The more logs you throw on the fire the wider the circle is, but the wider the circle of light becomes, the wider the circle of darkness is on the outside.

In other words, there is no way I can give to every request. It is impossible for me to satisfy all the claims others lay upon me this season.

Yet, it is important for me to give if I am truly to acknowledge God's gift to us in the birth of Christ as the greatest gift humanity has received.

So, I decide on my priorities. This year, I have decided on two opportunities for showing God's love. One priority is the Children's Homes offering which will go to the New Orleans and Ruston Methodist Homes for children. These are very special institutions that do a great deal of good. I want to honor them with my gift.

Further, I will be sending a gift to the children of the United Methodist Church of Ekaterinburg, Russia. It was my privilege to meet and baptize many of these children. They are bright-eyed and eager to learn about the Christian faith. My gift to them will be in the form of a simple Christmas book sent to one of these Russian children. I invite you to do the same. I will also include a special item of toiletry such as toothpaste and a toothbrush, some bars of soap, a comb, etc.

There is no need to look upon these children as deprived for they are not. This is not the place for second-hand clothes in order to clean out the closet. It is an occasion to share the love of Christ in a very special way. It takes about three weeks for a gift to go to Russia and since they begin celebrating Christmas on January 6, there is still time. Even if it is late, the gift will be well received.

Items to Russia can be mailed to:

The United Methodist Church of Ekaterinburg
Lydia Istomina
51 Lenina Avenue
Ekaterinburg
Russia 620086

God bless you as you seek to deepen your faith and broaden your vision during this season of giving.

William B. Oden

Children in His Tender Care: The Children's Home Offering

From the inception of the Wesleyan Movement, children and their needs have been a special part of the Church's concern. One of the earliest children's homes in America, Bethesda Orphan House, was set up in 1738 in Savannah, Georgia, by George Whitefield and Governor Oglethorpe under suggestion from Charles Wesley. The women's missionaries societies and the social concerns arm of the Church continued this great tradition throughout the nineteenth century and into this one.

It is not surprising then that Louisiana United Methodism carries within its loving care two institutions devoted entirely to the nurture of children.

In the heart of the inner city of New Orleans, Methodist Home lives out its mission to serve abused, abandoned and neglected children. Over 75% of reported cases of child abuse in Louisiana come from an 80-mile radius of this shelter.

The building at 815 Washington Avenue houses 37 beds for residential care and treatment. Under this umbrella, Therapeutic Foster Care serves another 60 children. There, the children are given a chance to thrive under a supportive and loving environment.

Further north, is the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston. According to its Board of Directors, "Louisiana Methodist Children's Home seeks to minister to the diverse needs of Louisiana's children and families experiencing stress, brokenness and other special circumstances. The Children's Home seeks to do this by offering a variety of services to promote personal growth and wholesome family life. This ministry is patterned after the example of Jesus who ministered to the total person in order that each individual might experience the wholeness that comes through the reconciling love of God."

Love came down at Christmas in the form of a child. The Children's Homes of Louisiana seek to share that love with the other children and their families in service to that same Christ child. It is appropriate that we too share in that love at this joyous time with our gifts and prayers.

On Christmas Sunday, December 22, Louisiana United Methodists will be given such an opportunity to share in this vital ministry: To be part of yet another visible form of our Church's care for God's children.

Posters Available

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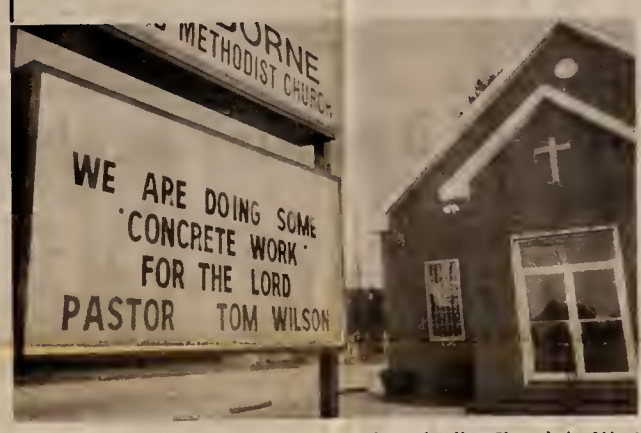
If you want a copy of one or both write:
August E. Aamodt
Director of Development
P. O. Box 929
Ruston, LA 71273-0929

Around the Conference



The members of the Claiborne United Methodist Church in West Monroe recently did some "concrete work" for the Lord when they paved their church parking lot. The picture above tells the story. The Rev. Thomas A. Wilson is pastor of Claiborne.

Thirty men from the Acadiana District met at the First United Methodist Church in Franklin for their Fall Rally. The program theme was "Reach Out and Touch." The Rev. Jerry Hilbun (pictured) of Asbury United Methodist Church in Bossier City, led the session on opportunities for United Methodist Men to become involved in missions. As a result of the gathering, a small task group was formed to organize a District Mission Project for 1992. A great meal was prepared by the men of Pharr Chapel United Methodist Church, Morgan City. Special Music and group singing was led by Mr. Lee Cook and Mr. Jim Fowler. The Rev. Richard Meek is pastor of First United Methodist Church, Franklin. Mr. Ben Mayfield is the Acadiana District United Methodist Men president.

The Work Area on Mission at First United Methodist Church in DeRidder recently prepared and served a Sunday-morning breakfast to help fund a Covenant Relationship with Ms. Doretha Brown, A United Methodist missionary serving in Sierra Leone. The Relationship is primarily financed through "A Mile of Pennies" (equalling $844.80) with the balance of the $1000 needed raised by the breakfast. The Rev. Richard A. Hebert is the pastor of the church.

Pictured left is the Rev. Ken Bowman, pastor of the St. Luke's Church in Baton Rouge, presenting a Two-Year Attendance Bar for perfect attendance in Sunday school to Miss Michelle Veillon. Miss Veillon is the only member of St. Luke's to receive this award since the program began in 1989. Those receiving One-Year Pins were Mrs. Lou Alexander, Ms. Mary Mulkey, Mr. Mark Bowman and Mrs. Ginger Bowman.

Appointment Changes

Since the 1991 session of Annual Conference, the following changes in ministerial appointments have been announced by Bishop Oden and the Cabinet:

Willis W. Dear (Full Connection) from Centenary-Fisher, North Shore District, to Summer Grove, Shreveport District, effective January 1, 1991.

Spiller W. Milton (Full Connection) from First United Methodist Church, Crowley, Lake Charles District, to Centenary-Fisher, North Shore District, effective January 1, 1991.

William L. Jones (Full Connection) from Lutcher Chapel-Gonzales-St. Landry-Metro Ministry, New Orleans District, to La Harpe-Thompson, New Orleans District, effective December 1, 1991.

Gregory McClay, Sr. (Local Pastor) to St. Landry-Lutcher Chapel, New Orleans District, effective December 1, 1991.

LeBaron Taylor (Other Denomination) to Mallalieu-Mt. Zion, Acadiana District, effective December 1, 1991.

Carl E. Johnson (full-time local pastor) from Mallalieu-Mt. Zion, Acadiana District, to Discontinued, effective November 30, 1991.

Percell Church, Jr. (probationay member) from La Harpe-Thompson, New Orleans District, to Withdrawal — surrender of credentials, effective November 1, 1991.

Stephen C. Fleming (Full Connection) from Istrouma Mission Center, Baton Rouge District to Full-Time Chaplain at Baton Rouge General Hospital, effective November 4, 1991.

Linda K. Shepherd (Local Pastor) from Rodessa, Shreveport District, to Quitman-Bienville, Ruston District, effective October 6, 1991.

Steven D. Bearden (Full Connection) from Summer Grove, Shreveport District, to Withdrawal — surrender of credentials, effective October 1, 1991.

Sherman L. Beird (Retired) from Pollock-Liberty Chapel, Alexandria District, to McArthur Drive, Alexandria District, effective September 1, 1991.

Lonnie M. Walding (Retired) from McArthur Drive-Melder, Alexandria District, to Melder, Alexandria District, effective September 1, 1991.

John Zehr (Full-Time Local Pastor) to Pollock-Liberty Chapel, Alexandria District, effective September 1, 1991.

Samuel Butler, Sr. (Other Denomination) to Wesley, Pineville-St. Mark's, Alexandria District, effective August 11, 1991.

Clyde T. Smith (Part-Time Local Pastor) to McDonald, Shreveport District, effective July 14, 1991.

Jay P. Irby (Full Connection) transferred from Louisiana Conference, Shreveport District, to Pacific Northwest Conference (Home Administration), effective July 1, 1991.

Melvin D. Zerger (Retired) to Calvary-Magnolia, Acadiana District, effective July 1, 1991.

William Mark Strickland (Other Denomination) to Associate, First United Methodist Church, Minden, Ruston District, effective July 1, 1991.

Tom O. Crosby, Jr. (Retired) to Tunica, Baton Rouge District, effective June 6, 1991.

Isaac A. Patton, Jr. (Retired) from Beekman-Bartholomew, Monroe District, to Beekman, Monroe District, effective June 1, 1991.

James E. Constable (Full Connection) from St. Andrew's, Monroe District, to Beekman, Monroe District, effective June 1, 1991.

Christmas Services on VISN

Much of VISN'S regular schedule will be pre-empted during Christmas Week (December 22-29) to offer a number of holiday specials, many of which are described in the following program highlights. Special holiday editions of regular VISN series will also be aired.

On December 24th and Christmas Day, VISN will offer 48 continuous hours of holiday programming, including music, drama, live specials and programs especially for children and family viewing. Some of the special programs include:

Highway: "Christmas at Durham Cathedral." (12/22/91) Opera stars Jessye Norman and Thomas Allen join host Sir Harry Secombe in a special hour-long Christmas edition of *Highway* from Durham Cathedral (England).

"Messiah." (12/22/91) Handel's *"Messiah"* is performed by the 300-voice Independence (Missouri) Messiah Choir, the Messiah Festival Orchestra and world-renowned soloists.

"The Fourth Wise Man." (12/24/91) Martin Sheen and Alan Arkin star in a moving 90-minute drama about a man and his servant whose good deeds in the name of the Messiah are finally repaid by the Messiah himself.

"Christmas Blessing from the Pope." (Live via tape delay, Christmas Day) From St. Peter's Square in Rome, Pope John Paul II his annual "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and to the world) message.

Nomination Process Begins for 1993-96 Conference Boards and Agencies

During the month of December all pastors and local church lay leaders will receive information regarding the nomination process for service on a conference board or agency for the next quadrennium. This new process was approved at the 1991 session of Annual Conference and is included in the Louisiana Conference Rules as printed in the 1991 Conference Journal.

The pastors and local church lay leaders have been asked to make the information brochure and nomination interest forms available to all persons who might have interest in serving on a conference board, commission, committee or council. All nomination interest forms are to be returned to the office of the respective district superintendent by no later than January 5, 1992.

Each district will forward all interest forms received to the District Nominating Committee. This committee will be responsible for recommending persons to the Conference Nominating Committee, which in turn will prepare a slate of nominations to be presented to the 1992 session of the Annual Conference. The slate of nominations will be included in the pre-conference reports.

Please contact your pastor or local church lay leader for further information.

Mark Your Calendars . . .

The District Leadership Training Events will be held in January and February in all nine districts. A team of leaders throughout the Conference will conduct all or some of the workshops on the following vital areas within the local church: Lay Leadership, United Methodist Men, Christian Education, Mission, Stewardship, Permanent Endowment, Youth Ministry, Spiritual Growth, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, Evangelism, Worship, Visioning and Small Membership Churches. Dates for the Training Event are as follows:

January 4	Shreveport	FUMC,	Bossier City	9:00 a.m.
January 11	Ruston	FUMC,	Arcadia	8:30 a.m.
	North Shore	FUMC,	Hammond	8:30 a.m.
January 12	Lake Charles	FUMC,	Lake Charles	2:30 p.m.
January 25	Monroe	FUMC,	Monroe	8:30 a.m.
	Acadiana	FUMC,	New Iberia	8:30 a.m.
	New Orleans	FUMC,	New Orleans	8:30 a.m.
February 1	Alexandria	FUMC,	Alexandria	8:30 a.m.
	Baton Rouge	FUMC,	Baton Rouge	8:30 a.m.

Editorial

Join the ongoing journey

Many exciting and creative things happen at UMR that we are unable to share with our readers.

One that we can't resist, however, is a description of how the family of one of our staff members observes Advent.

Here is how, in a recent staff devotional, UMR marketing director Bruce Baily described his family's traditional Advent journey.

"On the first Sunday of Advent we bring out the creche. After gently unwrapping each character, we set up the scene. The baby is kept in a drawer but the wise men are placed as far from the scene as possible.

"As the Advent season moves on so do the wise men. On each pass through the living room someone, adult or child, will move one of the wise men forward. Throughout Advent and Christmas, we watch them journey from dining room credenza to tables, across fireplace mantles and bookshelves, each slowly progressing to the manger scene."

On Christmas eve, Mr. Baily continued, one family member, unannounced, places the baby Jesus in the manger "leaving the other four of us to share in the wonder of the baby's appearance." But . . .

"Through the twelve days of Christmas, the journey of the Magi continues with a silent hand moving each one gently along. On Epiphany, the Magi will have arrived at the manger scene. Finally, all is as it should be. We exchange Epiphany gifts and talk about how great a Christmas it has been."

We're biased, of course, but we believe our colleague's family's Advent custom merits emulation, if not in specific detail then certainly in spirit.

The essence of that spirit is captured in Mr. Baily's explanation for his family's yearly ritual:

"Our intent is to remind ourselves that Christmas is an ongoing journey—not merely a single-day event but a way of life."

We agree. Consequently, we hope you will join us this Christmas in setting aside time, individually and with others, to reflect on how we can more faithfully experience and express that "way of life."

Indeed, the stories, music, and symbolism of Advent and Christmas offer particularly rich opportunities for entering imaginatively into Jesus' story and rehearsing its key themes, from Advent anticipation to Resurrection rejoicing.

Via such rehearsals we prepare ourselves for "live performances" as people of faith called to transform an ancient biblical story into a contemporary life-changing drama.

This year, let's move beyond superficial signs of the season—routine greetings, dutiful gift-giving and excessive eating—and commit ourselves to an "in-depth" Christmas by claiming Jesus' story as our own and offering it as a glorious gift to others.

Our UMR colleague's example and the other Advent observances reported elsewhere on this page show us imaginative ways to begin.

FaithLine

Banners, 'little things' mark readers' Advent

FaithLine asked readers how they observe Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas. Here are the five most creative responses received:

Preston Price, Santa Clarita, Calif.: One of the interesting traditions at our church during Advent is to solicit and make an Advent banner. Any individual or family can choose a felt square in November and using cross stitch or puff paint or other artistry, the family or individual puts together a design. The squares are used to create a banner. The banners are introduced the first Sunday of Advent. Recently several of the Advent banners have been put together into one very large one that covers a wall of the sanctuary. It's a special way for children to be involved. It is also a special way to look at different ways of celebrating Advent, different symbols and sentiments. The project results in a meaningful time for our church.

Darrell Beaty, Madison, Minn.: Each night during Advent, our family gathers around an Advent wreath. We have compiled a collection of appropriate worship meditations. Each evening we light the candle or candles appropriate for the week. We then have songs, scripture, a short meditation and prayer with joined hands. This is a special quiet time our family uses to prepare itself for the coming of Christ's birth.

> ***"Each Sunday during Advent, each worshiper was invited to sign a leaflet and place it in the offering plate as a covenant."***
>
> **—Jeff Rasche**

Lois Kohl, Westminster, Calif.: Since my children were very little, we always celebrated Advent on Dec. 1. We would get out the nativity set and get out an Advent calender. Each day of Advent, one of us would take turns opening the door and reading part of the Christmas story. After we had read the section of the Christmas story for that day, we would then put in one piece of the Nativity set, ending on Christmas morning by putting Baby Jesus in. My daughter got married this summer, and I have given her a nativity set and Advent calendar so she can carry on the tradition.

Charlotte Brewster, Dallas: Our church had a night service, "Hanging of the Greens." The Altar and Flower Guild hung wreaths around the church. We placed greenery on the altar and we had a miniature Christmas tree that represented a religious symbol which is widely thought to be a pagan symbol. Our minister of music explained what the religious implications of the Christmas tree are.

Jeff Rasche, San Jose, Ill.: A woman named Kay Breedlove has begun an Advent ministry in our congregation. Inspired by a sermon titled "Little Things Mean a Lot," Ms. Breedlove came up with the idea of a "five-minute ministry." Each Sunday during Advent, as a way to prepare for Christmas, each worshiper was invited to sign a leaflet and place it in the offering plate as a covenant. By doing so they 1) plan to give God five extra minutes each day between now and Christmas, 2) grow as a Christian disciple and 3) report how many "five-minute ministries" were accomplished the previous week, without identifying themselves.

On the first Sunday this was implemented, the total reported was 1,040 minutes—or 17½ hours of extra ministries. The next Sunday it went up to 1,100 minutes (18 hours, 20 minutes), then the next Sunday up to 1,367 minutes (22 hours, 45 minutes). Total on the fourth Sunday was 2,045 minutes, or about 34 hours. People gave an average of four hours and 52 extra minutes each day to some kind of special ministry—praying, Bible reading, etc. The program seemed to mean a lot to the people.

One congregation in California invites its members to create banners for Advent by fashioning pieces from felt squares. Often entire families join in the project, bringing added meaning to Christmas preparations.

Letters to the Editor

Our church can be proud of its stand against bigotry

In the wake of the recent Louisiana election, the church can be proud of its leaders who took public stands against the bigotry of David Duke.

Comparing the election to conditions in Germany in the early 1930s, Bishop William Oden urged Louisiana United Methodists through his weekly column not to be passive.

My district superintendent and other local ministers were interviewed on the evening news attending Friday night services at the Jewish synagogue in our city. Their witness was clear: the fear caused by neo-nazism has no place in our society.

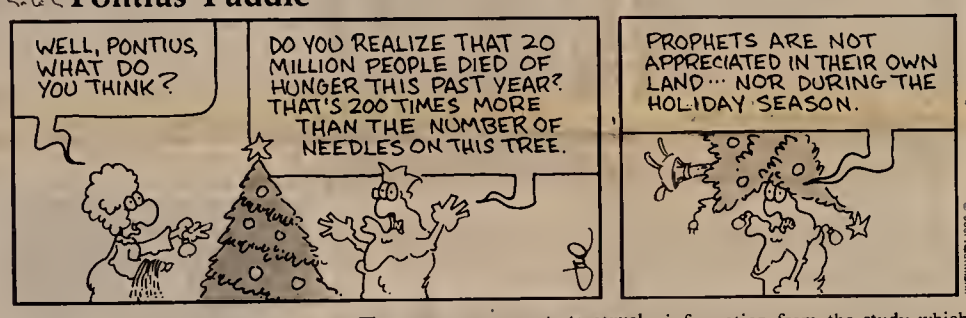
My pastor's open letter to our congregation appeared on the front page of the Shreveport "Times" expressly denouncing the hatred and racism stirred by Mr. Duke.

And, finally, the most vocal opposition across our state was presented through the relentless ads of the Coalition Against Racism and Nazism whose chairman is a United Methodist minister, Dr. James Stovall.

The moral voice of the church was a principle ingredient in exposing Mr. Duke. I have never been more proud of The United Methodist Church.

J. Jay Caraway
Shreveport, Louisiana

Pontius' Puddle



Thank God for voters

Thank God for the sanity and integrity of those voters in Louisiana who, when faced with undesirable choices, elected to forgive human sin but not to accept insidious evil.

Jerry D. Elrod
Tucson, Arizona

How about Joseph?

I note with interest that the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women has proposed a petition to the church's policy-making 1992 General Conference to develop a general policy on sexual harassment.

There are many aspects to sexual harassment. I wonder if Joseph's experience in Egypt with Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39-41) will be considered?

Stewart F. Bingman
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

Surveys are necessary

As general secretaries of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, we disagree with the Nov. 8 letter stating that "Denise Stovall's article was bemoaning the fact that 32 percent of lay leaders are women."

Ms. Stovall adequately stated the information from the study which was conducted in 1991 by our commission.

We affirm the choice women make to remain in the home to bear and raise the children. That is one model for women. It is important to emphasize this one example for some women does not portray a complete picture of the range of skills that women have to share with the church.

Role models of women in church leadership should be shown whenever it is possible. We celebrate strengths of women and men together in church leadership.

Without surveys being sent to local churches or other church entities, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women would merely be guessing about the progress in leadership of women in the church.

Cecelia M. Long
Stephanie Anna Hixon
Evanston, Illinois

God guarantees health

When your Nov. 22 editorial states that "God does not guarantee us good health or worldly success," you are wrong. God does guarantee us good health if we follow His precepts.

Sex is a very important, holy matter. It is too bad people treat sex like eating a steak and potato. I wish "Magic" Johnson had Christian values about sex and had kept himself single or to one woman during his career.

Another thing Mr. Johnson succumbed to was idolatry. He believed himself to be a public basketball god. And "god can do anything," right? We can see in nature that even God plays by the rules. We see it clearly in the life of Jesus Christ.

Barbara J. Thomas
Houston, Texas

Don't ban alcohol ads

As a life-long United Methodist who has spent his entire career in the broadcasting industry, I am somewhat amazed at the Reporter's posture of repeatedly encouraging The United Methodist Church to promote a ban on the advertising of alcoholic products (see UMR, Nov. 15).

Our country is better off allowing the advertising of all legal products. If the product is so bad, let's make it illegal. We do that with many products and the system seems to work.

I am fearful of a government with the ability to outlaw advertising of any product. Alcohol today. Sugar tomorrow? Red meat the next day? Or religion?

In the case of my own three children, their use, or lack of use, of alcoholic beverages was more influenced by what they learned within their home than from the media.

Dean Sorenson
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

What others are saying

"Participation in the Christian life has never been the sweet and simple thing some would have us believe. But as we move through Advent, living with our ambivalence, we come to a rediscovery that brushes aside our doubts: God's overwhelming love is at the core of life. At the manger we are surrounded by God's great and relentless love—the love that refuses, whatever we do, whatever the cost, to let us go."

—United Methodist laywoman Dorothy Williams, St. Louis Park, Minn.

* * *

"In the churches I have served the dreamers have most frequently been women. Sometimes when men have been practical and often hesitant, it was the women who provided the strength and led the way."

—The Rev. Bryan Crenshaw, International Bible Series

* * *

"Traditionally, we have been taught that there are two basic forms of sin: sins of omission and sins of commission. However, there is a third form of sin, and it is far more insidious in terms of its impact upon human community: sins of permission. That is, we simply acquiesce to sin and evil and never lift a voice or a finger to stop it."

—H. Eddie Fox and George E. Morris in their book, "Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So!"

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"The saying is sure and worthy of acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Book _____ *Chapter* ___ : *Verse* _____

(Last week's answer: Isaiah 42:1)

Readings for week of Dec. 23

Monday: Psalms 80:1-7
Tuesday: Micah 5:2-3
Wednesday: Micah 5:4-5a
Thursday: Luke 1:39-45
Friday: Luke 1:46-55
Saturday: Hebrews 10:5-7
Sunday: Hebrews 10:8-10

Faithfully yours

This Advent I pray for the grace to forgive

From time to time I am reminded of my Christian responsibilities when I'm least prepared and from sources I least expect.

Daniel J. Louis

This happened to me twice lately.

The first time occurred when, like hundreds of thousands of others, I was riveted to the television screen during the first news conference of recently released hostage Terry Anderson.

My admiration was growing every minute as I listened to Mr. Anderson detail his ordeal and heard him respond with crisp candor to reporters' questions.

But, I was not prepared for his answer when a reporter asked about his feelings toward his captors.

After a thoughtful moment, Mr. Anderson said in a strong and certain voice, "I don't hate them." Then after a few additional comments he added, "You know I am a Christian and a Catholic, and that demands of me that I forgive—and I have."

A few days later, again like hundreds of thousands, I watched with mixed emotions televised ceremonies commemorating those who died 50 years ago during the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

As events progressed President Bush made remarks about the significance of the day for him. He had been a pilot during World War II and had been shot down by the Japanese.

Then in a sincere tone he said, "I hold no rancor in my heart toward Germany or Japan—none at all."

Then he added, "I hope you have none in yours."

It was not lost on me that Mr. Anderson and Mr. Bush made their witnesses to forgiveness just hours before the beginning of Advent—a penitential season when Christians are asked to prepare to receive anew the Prince of Peace.

How can a world ever know peace without forgiveness? And how can we ever truly forgive without seeking forgiveness for our own acts of wrong-doing?

In this Advent I shall pray for the grace to forgive. But I also shall pray for the courage to acknowledge wrongs I have done and for the faith to seek the ever-available forgiveness of God in Christ.

Then, with new confidence, I shall pray for peace.

—DAN J. LOUIS

Mr. Louis is General Manager and Interim Chief Executive of the Reporter.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, Editor and Chief Executive
Daniel J. Louis, General Manager
John A. Lovelace, Managing Editor
Darrell L. Bryant, Conference Editions
Stephen L. Swecker, Faith Forum Page Editor
Kay Fielder, Local Editions

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Perkins School of Theology — **Southern Methodist University**

Faculty Openings

Tenure track positions are open in the following fields:

- **Church Music (Send C.V. to Office of the Dean, Perkins School of Theology, SMU, Dallas, TX 75275 by March 1)**
- **Christian Education (Send C.V. to Office of the Dean, Perkins School of Theology, SMU, Dallas, TX 75275 by April 1)**
- **Systematic Theology (Send C.V. to Leroy Howe, Perkins Hall of Admin., SMU, Dallas, TX 75275 by April 1)**

Ph.D. degree or equivalent degree and demonstrated competency in teaching and scholarship required. Women and ethnic minority persons are encouraged to apply. SMU is an affirmative action/equal opportunity Title IX employer.

Faith watch

BUDGET PROPOSED: A four-year (1993-96) budget of $495.65 million supporting basic domestic and international work of the United Methodist Church was approved at a recent meeting of the denomination's General Council of Finance and Administration. This is an increase of about $78.4 million over the current four-year (1989-92) budget. The new budget, like the old, will be raised primarily via fair-share apportionments against United Methodist local congregations. The budget proposal goes now to the church's policymaking General Conference May 5-15, 1992, in Louisville, Ky.

INSURER WITHDRAWING: Atlantic Mutual, an insurance carrier, has notified United Methodism's top fiscal agency that it will discontinue workers' compensation coverage packages to United Methodist local churches in 13 states effective March 1992. Claims in those states have been extraordinary, the carrier said, causing significant losses to the company. The carrier added, though, that it will continue coverage for employees of annual conferences and for bishops. The church's General Council of Finance and Administration is seeking a new provider for the coverage being lost. States in which changes in carriers are expected are Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, New Mexico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Kansas, Missouri, Mississippi and Rhode Island.

IRS PROBLEMS FOR CLERGY: Up to $14,000 was approved by the church's top fiscal agency recently to help finance a test case related to problems some United Methodist clergy are having with the Internal Revenue Service regarding their income tax filing status. The request for funding came from three of the church's 72 annual conferences in the U.S.: North Carolina, Western North Carolina and Memphis. United Methodist clergy have been traditionally considered self-employed by the IRS. This status is being increasingly challenged by the IRS.

CHURCHES IN COVENANT: United Methodists have both "the easiest and hardest roads" toward covenant with eight other religious bodies in the Consultation on Church Union. That's the opinion of the group's chief executive, the Rev. **David W. A. Taylor**. He says the main challenge United Methodists face concerning COCU's wide-ranging covenant proposal is "what it means to be in communion with other Christians." The easy part, said Dr. Taylor, a Presbyterian talking with the Disciples News Service, is that all United Methodists have to do is "show up for the wedding." The Consultation on Church Union is proposing a process which could lead to church union among its eight member bodies.

PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH PLAN: The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.—seeking a major medical funding formula for the next five years that will not financially cripple the church—is preparing a report to the church's policymaking 1992 General Assembly recommending a combination of dues increases and benefit cuts. The pensions board will also carry its report to five regional conferences this spring: March 12-13 in Newark, N.J.; March 26-27 in Atlanta; April 2-3 in Minneapolis; April 28-29 in Dallas and April 30-May 1 in Los Angeles.

Compiled from news and staff reports

After freeze, churches face torrent of tears

UM pastors and growers struggle to comfort farmworkers left jobless by frozen crops

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

LINDSAY, Calif.—If tears were all it took to restore the San Joaquin Valley, the damage caused by a 1990 drought and freeze would be reversed by now.

The Rev. Richard Pitcher has dried many of those tears—too many, perhaps.

For the past year, the pastor of First United Methodist Church in Lindsay has been virtually on special assignment—with his congregation's blessing—to serve the interfaith response to the 1990 freeze.

Asked couple to work

"One day I asked a Hispanic husband and wife to do some work at the parsonage," Mr. Pitcher explained. "I had seen them at the interfaith office. The husband never smiled.

"At the parsonage, when the husband picked up the garden shears, he began to weep. I tried to comfort him but I couldn't understand what the problem was. Finally, his wife came out to translate. She told me he said: 'All my life I have been able to take care of my family, until now. This is the first work I've had in nine months.' "

The Dec. 22-23, 1990, freeze—the longest period of below-20-degree temperatures in California's recorded history—combined with an equally severe drought earlier that year to turn "the nation's fruit basket" into a brown dustbowl.

Destroyed agriculture

The freeze destroyed all four agricultural mainstays—oranges, olives, lemons and avocados—in Tulare County, about 300 miles south of San Francisco.

This year only the oranges have come back, at half the previous years' volume.

Crop losses are calculated at more than $1.5 billion, ranking the 1990 freeze as California's third-worst disaster after the 1906 and 1989 earthquakes (see UMR, Dec. 13).

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

LINDSAY, Calif.—The Rev. Richard Pitcher telephones a local power company, promising to pay the electric bill of a farmworker family while Olga de LaTorre, a mental health counselor, stands by to assist him. The United Methodist pastor has become known to farmworkers left unemployed by the 1990 freeze as someone to whom they can turn for help.

Unlike some farming areas, Lindsay and neighboring Porterville have stable farmworker populations. Many laborers, mostly Mexican-Americans and Asian-Americans, have worked for growers regularly for many years.

As a result of their economic stability, these farmworkers had been able to save money and often secured mortgages for permanent homes.

Income stripped away

Now that their income has been stripped away, their homes and their stability are jeopardized, said Mr. Pitcher and his colleague, the Rev. James Lynn, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Porterville, 12 miles away.

"It took us so long to realize we had a disaster, because there were no dramatic effects like in an earthquake or a fire, that relief was a long time in coming," said Mr. Lynn, who has been active in Porterville's interfaith disaster response group.

Both pastors blame the inattentiveness of federal officials advising President Bush and the freeze's coincidence with the Persian Gulf war for the slowness of federal disaster response. The President's refusal to approve aid for farmers and the lack of publicity about the disaster's long-term effects have left bitter aftertastes.

Mr. Lynn and Mr. Pitcher estimated it may take 10 years before their section of California's farming country recovers from freeze damage.

Meanwhile, added the pastors, their communities are apprehensive about infestation of whiteflies in California's second-largest growing area, the Imperial Valley near the Mexican border. Should the pests move north and infest the freeze-damaged San Joaquin, they say, no one can estimate the long-term impact.

Freeze response

Freeze-response efforts have centered on providing food, crisis counseling, money and occasionally short-term jobs to farmworkers. Food banks in the area have reported a 2,000 percent increase in the demand for their services.

In addition, many growers—including some members of Mr. Pitcher's church in Lindsay—took out loans so they could continue to pay their workers the same level of income as in previous years, despite the crop failures.

Some growers are having trouble paying back their loans because of the freeze damage, Mr. Pitcher said. Now they're in danger of losing farms and groves that have been in their families for generations.

Saving Grace: When Disaster Challenges Faith

EDITOR'S NOTE: United Methodists and others in northern California have endured four major natural disasters—earthquake, drought, freeze and firestorm—over the past two years. Their stories of disaster response, spiritual reassessment and risk preparedness offer significant witness for congregations throughout The United Methodist Church.

NEXT IN THE SERIES:
Dec. 27: Disasters: Not IF, but WHEN?

Finding hope amid disaster

Reporter Staff Special

PORTERVILLE, Calif.—How do United Methodists and others in the San Joaquin Valley find hope amid the bleak economic prospects left by the 1990 freeze?

A new and stronger sense of community animates Porterville congregations, said the Rev. James Lynn, pastor of First United Methodist Church.

"Our working relationships among churches were enhanced a great deal by our crisis experience," he explained of Porterville's interfaith freeze response.

The Rev. Richard Pitcher, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Lindsay, said he intends to continue his outreach among farmworkers.

His motivation, he said, comes from this anecdote:

One day Mr. Pitcher hired some temporary workers to move a load of food from the church to the interfaith food bank.

After the food was loaded, the man went into the sanctuary, knelt before the altar and began to weep and pray in Spanish. Mr. Pitcher knelt with the man, weeping himself, praying in English.

The worker's companion translated his remarks for Mr. Pitcher:

"I thought that God had abandoned the people because there was no food. Now that I come to this church and see this food, I know that God has not abandoned the people."

—*CYNTHIA B. ASTLE*

Bishop: Avoid 'superficial' Christmas message

United Methodist News Service

WASHINGTON—United Methodists have been called on by the president of the church's Council of Bishops to "not fool one another with superficial messages of Christmas that only touch the surface of human life."

Following is the text of the Christmas message by Bishop Emilio de Carvalho (Western Angola Area):

"This is the time of the year when thousands of Christians and, persons of good will exchange messages, wishing one another 'a merry Christmas and a happy new year.'

"What does it mean to have a merry Christmas and a happy new year? Suppose that you were to send such a message to somebody in Angola, Zaire, Liberia or Yugoslavia today. How would you reconcile the merriment of Christmas and the happiness of a new year with the pains of war and the uncertainties of the future?

"We learn that when the shepherds were confronted by the angel with 'good news of a great joy,' it was because 'a Savior' had been born to all the peoples. No matter in what circumstances people live, the joy of having a Savior is far more embracing than the joy that comes from comfort, from wealth and from a good life. No matter from which perspective life is seen, the Savior who is Christ the Lord penetrates life, making it more livable and happy.

"So let us not fool one another with superficial messages of Christmas that only touch the surface of human life. For many of us who have lived 'on the spot,' Christmas means that the Savior born in the city of David came to identify himself with those who suffer, to make them wish for a new life, turning all structures of injustice into powerful means of liberation, 'putting down the mighty from their thrones and exalting those of low degree.'

"This is what makes Christmas an occasion for merriment and for happiness. It is the knowledge of the redeeming Christ, which makes men and women rejoice and feel happy. Have, then, a merry Christmas and may the new year bring you good news of a great joy!"

Emilio de Carvalho
. . . avoid 'superficial'

Financial directors tighten controls on church agencies' expenses

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—The folks looking after the money your United Methodist congregation contributes to general church funds say that control of some employee expenses from those funds needs tightening up.

These folks are the directors of the church's top financial agency, the General Council on Finance and Administration.

After hearing a report of the finance council's audit committee at a recent meeting in Schaumburg, directors voted to establish uniform standards that must be followed by all agencies receiving general church funds.

These standards will address possible abuses in three major areas: loans to employees, travel expenses and employee dishonesty.

When the audit committee chair, Sandra Kelley Lackore, was asked if such abuses had been detected, she declined to comment other than to say that it was important for church agencies to avoid even the appearance of improprieties.

These are among specific proposals:

■ Loans to employees: All agencies will be required to submit annual reports on employees' loan repayment.

At present, several church agencies lend money to employees—short-term or "bridge" loans, mortgage loans and salary advances. The General Board of Global Ministries, for example, reportedly holds some $3.6 million in mortgage loans made to employees. Repayment policies vary from agency to agency.

■ Staff travel expenses: All travel will meet Internal Revenue Service guidelines. That is, travel must be related to the mission of the agency, and expenses should cover staff members only.

If a staff member should ignore these guidelines by taking a spouse or a friend on a business-related trip and charging the expenses to the agency, those expenses will be reported to the IRS as income to the staff member.

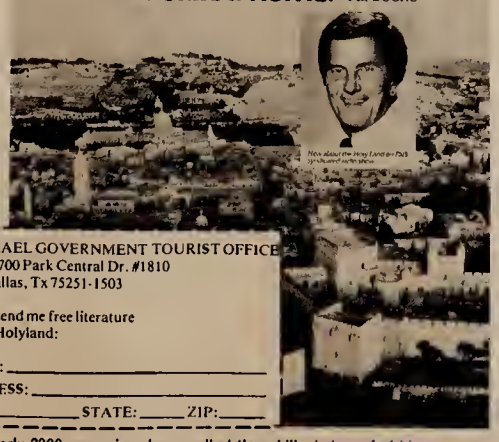
Personal use of corporate credit cards, except in emergencies, will be prohibited.

■ Fidelity insurance: Each agency will be required to carry policies of $1 million maximum to cover possible employee dishonesty and $100,00 to cover possible forgery.

The 13 agencies of the United Methodist Church are Church and Society, Discipleship, Global Ministries, Higher Education and Ministries, Council on Ministries, Finance and Administration, Board of Pensions, United Methodist Communications, Archives and History, Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Religion and Race, Status and Role of Women and United Methodist Publishing House.

Audits of all agencies except the Publishing House and the Board of Pensions are reviewed by the General Council on Finance and Administration.

"I feel closer to the Lord in the land He called home."—Pat Boone



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Hope to see you soon.
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Councils favor 'no move' for UM agencies

By DIANE HUIE BALAY
Associate Editor

SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—No United Methodist general agency headquarters should be moved before 1996.

That's the considered opinion of directors of two of the denomination's top administrative agencies as expressed at a recent joint meeting in Schaumburg.

Directors of the General Council on Finance and Administration and the General Council on Ministries recommend that all 13 general agency headquarters be retained in their present locations until 1996 or after.

The recommendation will go to the church's top legislative body, the General Conference, in Louisville, Ky., May 5-15.

Running somewhat counter to the above proposal, the 1,000 delegates to General Conference will also consider a task force report that recommends moving the denomination's mission-sending agency out of New York City by the end of 1995.

The task force, instructed by the 1988 General Conference to study the feasibility of moving the General Board of Global Ministries, concluded that the move was not only feasible but desirable.

However, most directors at the recent joint meeting in Schaumburg agreed that location of all agency headquarters should be the subject of an in-depth, long-range analysis over the next four years before any move is taken.

A "serious examination" of the church's mission, vision and structure can be expected in the next four years, the directors said, which could affect the headquarters' location.

Some directors objected to including the General Board of Global Missions in the no-move recommendation.

Pam Shaffer of Sitka, Alaska, introduced a motion to exclude that board from the councils' no-move recomendation.

She said the councils should not bring their influence into the decision-making process of whether or not to move the General Board of Global Ministries.

The Shaffer amendment was overwhelmingly defeated.

Governing bodies of the two groups are required to meet together every four years ahead of the quadrennial General Conferences to agree on budget recommendations for the church's domestic and international programs.

The General Council of Ministries, headquartered in Dayton, Ohio, is the chief program coordinating unit of the denomination; the finance agency is located in Evanston, Ill.

Other major United Metbodist agencies are in Washington and Nashville.

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

'HEADLINERS' HONORED: The Governing Board of The United Methodist Reporter recently approved five persons as winners of the 1991 UMR Headliners award. The awards are given in recognition of special support for the newspaper and its related communications ministries. Named are **Alex Bickley**, Dallas attorney and outgoing chairman of the UMR Foundation board; **Peg Parker**, editor of the California-Pacific Annual Conference "Circuit West" edition of the Reporter; the Rev. **Dwight Ramsey**, senior minister of Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La., and a moving force behind the new first United Methodist congregation in Russia; the Rev. **David Scoates**, senior minister of Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church in Minneapolis, and the Rev. **Lycurgus M. Starkey Jr.**, outgoing chairman of the UMR Governing Board.

'SEARCH FOR SPIRITUALITY': A National Council of Churches' documentary by that title is to be broadcast by ABC-TV affiliates Jan. 19. The program raises the question of a possible resurgence in religion in the 1990s and shows various ways U.S. citizens explore and celebrate spirituality.

HEADED TO CHICAGO: United Methodist layman **David Ochoa** has been named vice president of development and public affairs for Chicago State University. He has served the past four years as vice president of university relations at United Methodist-related Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage. Before that he headed communications for the church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. In 1990 Mr. Ochoa was selected one of the 100 most influential Hispanics by "Hispanic Business Magazine."

David Ochoa

FOR NEWSLETTER TIPS: Dozens of practical tips on writing, editing, layout and design for local church newsletters are included in a new 16-minute video released by United Methodist Communications. Closed captioned for hearing-impaired viewers, the video takes editors through the entire production process, according to **Shirley Whipple Struchen**, UMCom staff member. The video is distributed through EcuFilm.

CORRECTION: The Church of All Nations of Aberdeen, South Dakota, was incorrectly identified in an article in the Dec. 13 issue of the Reporter. The article told of visits by members of the church's General Council on Ministries to Native American ministries across the country. The Reporter regrets the error.

Can church activities lead to drug abuse?

Expert says to replace hectic schedules, 'hassled' families with supportive ministries

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

FORT WORTH, Texas—Does your local church contribute to a "hectic" family life, one that might lead to addictive behavior by some of your church members?

Bobbie H. Rowland posed that possibility during the National Pan-Methodist Coalition meeting in Fort Worth this month.

A member of First United Methodist Church in Gastonia, N.C., Dr. Rowland is professor of child and family development at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte.

Systems related

She explained to the 210 coalition members how family systems are related to substance abuse.

"The family stays under pressure," said Dr. Rowland. "Parents try to coordinate different demands of family and jobs and different demands of the church.

"Whether your church is big or small, does it put a lot of hassle on the family?"

The professor described a scenario known to all good Methodists: On any given Sunday, some people attend the worship service, followed by a council on ministries meeting in the afternoon and followed by a choir program in the evening—all with their children in tow.

Major danger

"The major danger in the external havoc is that it becomes internal and the stress becomes psychological and then it affects relationships of all members of the family," said Dr. Rowland.

The professor contends that everday stresses on the family can lead to dysfunctional family life. Dysfunction then often contributes, she said, to addictions such as drug or alcohol abuse, anorexia, bulimia or overeating.

How do people in the church help maintain the family or help others improve their lives together?

Dr. Rowland said it's done by prioritizing family as a strategic ministry in your church.

"This is the area where the church is uniquely qualified to help."

Dr. Rowland said she has found in North Carolina that on the state and local level the church was doing the least of all institutions to help families.

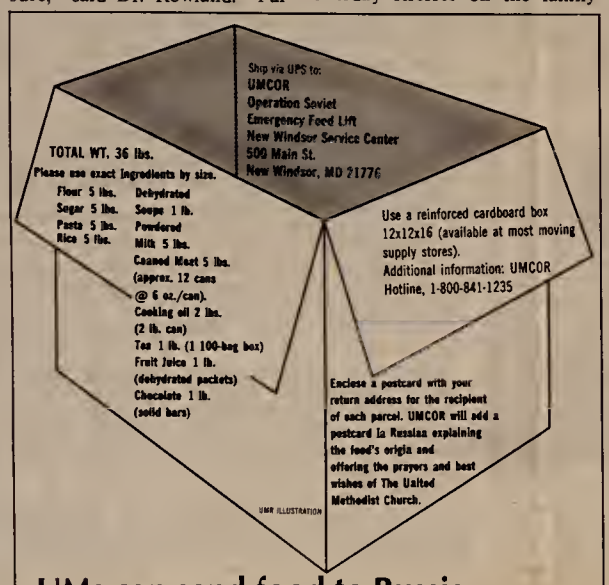
She recommended three ways the church can change:

• **Offer concrete, visible support.** "I don't mean just prayer sessions and candlelight sessions but offer after-school programs, parent education, family life education, intergenerational events, quality day care, anything that the people in your congregation lack. Be the leader in your community to offer that kind of support."

• **Provide referrals to help families prevent problems.** "This is what I call 'the personal touch referral.' It's keeping in touch with [members in your] congregations so you know when there are problems. It's taking time to know about each other. All you have to do is say, 'How are you?' "

• **Heal the wounds of your members.** "The church is uniquely qualified to heal the wounds," said Dr. Rowland. "You heal the wounds through prayer, through affirmation and through counseling. The church needs to do a little investigating, [to learn] what is working, and what brings results."

Bobbie H. Rowland
. . . encourages family ministries



UMs can send food to Russia

United Methodists are encouraged to contribute non-perishable food for "Operation Soviet Emergency Food Lift," an interdenominational effort intended to offset predicted severe food shortages in Soviet republics this winter. This illustration gives instructions provided by the United Methodist Committee on Relief on what to purchase and how to pack and ship a box of food.

Pan-Methodist resource aims to help churches 'revive hope' for drug users

Reporter Staff Special

FORT WORTH—"Congregations are urged to communicate to the community and hurting persons that 'prevention is practiced here' and 'recovery is spoken here.' "

That double-edged rationale helped unveil a curriculum resource kit Dec. 6 to get congregations in the Methodist tradition active in ministries concerning substance abuse.

The kit, called "Revival of Hope Church Guide Package," has been produced through a cooperative effort of four curriculum and Christian education agencies in the National Pan-Methodist Coalition.

Video and guides

The kit contains a video viewer's and leader's guide; a video; a church guide on alcohol and other drug concerns; a description of United Methodism's response to the drug crisis and a comprehensive listing of 146 Methodist-related alcohol and drug abuse programs throughout the country.

The kit was unveiled during a national training event called "PAN-ACTS1"—short for "Pan-Methodist Acts of Christian Witness, Training, and Serving."

The Rev. Duane A. Ewers, editor for church school publications at The United Methodist Publishing House and chair of the core team for the project, told the Reporter the kit was produced "to urge the church to bring to this problem the spiritual resources churches uniquely represent.

"We are urging congregations to live by truth and not illusion," said Dr. Ewers. "The truth is that all of us have struggles in life, all of us are persons who are on the journey, and most of us know the hurt related to addictions.

"Congregations are urged to communicate to the community and hurting persons that 'prevention is practiced here' and 'recovery is spoken here.' "

Pan-Methodist cooperation

Mary Love, editor of church school publications for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, said the impetus for the new curriculum came from the curriculum/publications sub-group of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation.

This commission is composed of representatives of The United Methodist Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion and The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1989, the Pan-Methodist commission accepted substance abuse as an an issue on which all four denominations could work together.

A major grant of $462,950 for the curriculum was given jointly by two United Methodist agencies: the General Board of Discipleship and the General Board of Publications. The other three Methodist denominations are to contribute $90,000 over three years.

The curriculum is now available to local congregations through Cokesbury service centers.

—DENISE JOHNSTON STOVALL

'Hooked' by violent toys? UM guide gives buying tips

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

Are you a parent looking for alternatives to violent-theme toys for Christmas gifts?

Is there a way to select toys that will encourage creative play in your children?

Those questions and others are answered in the "Parents' Guide to Non-Violent Toy Buying," published by the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society.

Produced by a team of church- and university-related child development professionals, the booklet provides examples of toys with violent and non-violent themes; counsel on video games and a list of manufacturers of alternative toys that promote positive play.

The booklet offers these guidelines that a parent may find helpful in selecting toys during the Christmas season:

1. Look the toy over carefully and think about its purpose. What will the child be learning or imitating from use of this toy?

2. Read the packaging! What is the attitude toward life promoted by this toy?

3. What is the toy's play value? Can it be used again and again in a variety of ways? Is it appropriate for this child's age level? Will it isolate the child or assist him/her in social development?

4. Does it help the child develop imagination without his or her being lost in a world of overwhelming fantasy?

5. Does it assist the child in learning to cope with and bring order to the real world?

6. Would I feel comfortable being involved in the child's play with this toy?

7. Are the concepts presented by the toy appropriate for the child?

8. What are the values promoted by the toy? Does it promote concern for humankind? Does it allow for the *development* of positive values? Is it in tune with what I want my child to grow up to be?

The booklet can be ordered for $1 from Discipleship Resources for Church and Society, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

Rural chaplains certified

United Methodist News Service

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The United Methodist Church will now assign special status to persons in ministry in rural communities and small towns.

The first 39 "rural chaplains"—ordained ministers and laypeople—were certified recently during the organizational meeting of the Rural Chaplains Association, to be related to the National Division of the denomination's Board of Global Ministries (BGM). More than 60 people from across the United States attended the meeting.

The new association and the idea of the resulting chaplaincy were born during the nationwide farm crisis that began in the early 1980s.

The goal of the group is to bring ministries of healing and hope within congregations and "beyond the gates" of day-to-day church work, according to Wayne Oates, a specialist in pastoral counseling who addressed the association.

Rural chaplains will work with individuals, families and communities coping with changing patterns of life in small towns in rural areas.

The persons certified included seven laypersons and nine women, and represented 22 of the 72 United Methodist annual (regional) conferences in the United States and Puerto Rico.

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IMMEDIATE POSITION: YOUTH/ACTIVITIES Director. Growing 1300-member church. Suburban Memphis. Full-time responsihilities include: oversight of entire program of youth ministries, maintenance and creative programming for large activities building. Salary negotiable. Insurance coverage. Resumes hy January 15th. Dr. David M. Hilliard, Jr., Emmanuel UMC, 2404 Kirby Rd., Memphis, TN 38119.

MUNHOLLAND UMC OF METROPOLITAN New Orleans, membership 2000, is seeking a full-time Director of Christian Education immediately. Responsibilities are for adult, family, and emphasis on children. Compensation is negotiable. Send resume to: Pastor-Parish Committee, 1201 Metairie Road, Metairie, LA 70005.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH, medium size church. Resume and inquiries to: Tapp Memorial UMC, P.O. Box 35, New Boston, TX 75570.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION/ Program Ministries, emphasis on youth and children. Full-time; now available. 850-member church. Send resume to: Fairview UMC, 1013 Westover Dr., Danville, VA 24541.

FULL-TIME DIRECTOR of Christian Education for 1200-memher church. Will assume responsihilities January 1, 1992. Degree, (must be certified in Christian education.) Responsible for education all age levels, emphasis adult and children's ministries. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Rev. Marshall McQueen, First UMC, P.O Box 925, Katy, TX 77492-0925.

FULL-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR of large, growing church. 300 children, youth, adults involved in multi-faceted program. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Reverend James R. Porter, Trinity United Methodist Church, 3321 West Park Row, Arlington, TX 76013.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTH CENTRAL Jurisdiction. For joh description and application: South Central Jurisdiction, 6155 Samuell Blvd., Oallas, TX 75228 or (214) 321-7077.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES (ordained, diaconal, certified youth worker, or experience equivalent to training). Salary negotiable. Full-time position, could include recreation ministries. Work with program staff of 7 people, 2600-memher church. Traditional Methodist with strong relational and programming skills. Send resume to: St. Paul United Methodist Church, Box 3396, Ahilene, TX 79604.

THE OHIO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES seeks Executive Oirector for eight-person staff. Requires articulate communicator, fiscal creativity, professional background in ecumenism, sensitivity to contemporary society. Ordained or lay member of constituent denomination of the Council. Women/minorities encouraged to apply. Resumes hy 2/7/1992: Ohio Council of Churehes, 89 E. Wilson Bridge Rd., Columhus, OH 43085-2391.

METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL In Ohio invites applications and nominations for a tenure-track position in Church History, with specialization in Reformation and/or African-American religious history, for Fall 1992. Rank and salary open, dependent on qualifications and experience. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply. Methesco is a denominational school with an ecumenical faculty and student body. In addition to the basic M.Div., the Sehool offers masters degrees in alcohol and drug ahuse ministry, Christian Education, Theological Studies and Liturgical Arts. Candidates should be prepared to teach introductory level courses, as well as advanced seminars in the context of such a seminary community. Active commitment to and involvement in the life of the church is important. Review of applications will begin January 20, 1992, and continue until position is filled. Send letter of application with vita/dossier and letters of reference to: Frederick C. Tiffany, Dean, Methodist Theological Sehool in Ohio, P.O. Box 1204, Delaware, OH 43015. AA/EOE.

POSITION AVAILABLE Full-time Oirector of Youth and Young Adult Ministry with primary emphasis on youth. Experience in youth ministry/Christian education and youth music desired. Please send resumes to: The Rev. John E. Denmark, Pastor, Port Charlotte United Methodist Church, 21075 Quesada Ave., Port Charlotte, FL 33952.

PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY EUROPE with Paul Lambourne Higgins April 6-27, 1992: Black Madonna of Switzerland, Germany, South France, Dresden, Lourdes, Loire Valley. $5,500 includes: round trip Swiss Air Boston-Zurich, motor coach, first class hotels, meals, taxes, seminars. Contact: Rev. Higgins, 60 Thatcher Rd., Rockport, MA 01966 (508) 546-2993, or Judy Smith, Davisville Travel, 1-800-255-4567.

DIRECTOR OF OEVELOPMENT: Appalachia Service Project, Inc. seeks skilled individual in fundraising and development for home repair/building ministry. Knowledge and experience preferred in mail campaigns, annual and capital fund drives, major gifts, endowments, planned giving, foundation and corporate appeals and fundraising with churches and individuals. Need excellent writing and speaking skills; grant writing and computer usage. Be willing to travel. Salary: $23,000 to $26,000 plus henefits. Send resume and cover letter to: Executive Director, Appalachia Service Project, 117 W. Watauga Avenue, Johnson City, TN 37604. Deadline 12/31/91.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. 450-member small-town congregation. Active program of nurture/outreach for all age levels. Particular emphasis on children/youth ministries. Salary and benefits over $25,000, plus housing. Send resume to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 510, Winnfield, LA 71483. (318) 628-4181.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH Theological Institute at Candler School of Theology to develop and supervise new program. Equal opportunity employer. Contact person for respondents: Charles R. Foster, ext. 7-1460, Search Committee, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322.

PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR, Center For Asian-American Ministries. Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary seeks faculty member with Ph.D. degree or its equivalent to teach in at least one of the following fields: scripture, theology, ethics and society, or practical theology; and direct the Center for Asian-American Ministries (percentage of time negotiable). The Center works with a range of Asian-American students and churches, the majority of which are Korean-American. Rank and possibility of tenure will he determined by training, publication record, experience. The position is availahle July 1, 1992. The seminary is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants should send their vita, along with a statement of qualifications for and interest in the position, by February 1, 1992 to the Dean's Office, G-ETS, 2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND College Age Ministries. Full-time position in 2,600-member church in university community. Very large youth program. Experience is required. Send resume by 1/31/92 to: Oavid Dodge, Diaconal Minister of Program, Trinity UMC, 3536 NW 8th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32605.

WANTED: DIRECTOR OF YOUTH and Leisure Ministries. Ministry to youth and coordination of recreational activities for a large growing congregation. Full-time position. Send resume to: Jennie Weeks, Christ Church United Methodist Church, 4614 Brownshoro Road, Louisville, KY 40207.

TEACHER OF EVANGELISM. United Methodist Conference seeks Teacher of Evangelism Full-Time. Requirements: Theological competence, demonstrated effectiveness as teacher and motivator in evangelism in local-connectional church. Equivalent to M.Div. and work on Ph.D. desirable. Lay or Clergy, without regard to race or gender. Send full resume, references and up to 400 words on theology and understanding of evangelism to: Dr. David Severe, 2420 N. Blackwelder, Oklahoma City, OK 73106. Deadline: February 1, 1992.

APPOINTMENTS IN THE FIELD Of Pastoral Psychology And Counseling Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, a graduate school on the campus of Northwestern University, seeks two faculty members in the field of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling, one heginning Fall 1992, another Fall 1992. Criteria include: Ph.D. or equivalent degree, commitment to the church and to graduate professional theological education, research and publication, ability to promote intellectual/spiritual growth, and, in one of the appointments, ability to administer a doctoral program as a portion of faculty assignment. Persons who are African-American and can interpret and utilize that experience in teaching both African-American students and students of other cultural hackgrounds are particularly encouraged to apply. Candidates should be clinically, theologically, empirically, and cross-culturally informed. Salary, rank, and tenure dependent on education, experience, and publication. The seminary is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Send applications and nominations to: Dean's Office, G-ETS, 2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201. Review of applications will begin January 15, 1992.

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"RESHAPING THE INNER YOUTH," by Dr. William H. Hinson, selected by Guidepost's Book Club, is now available for the reduced price of $5.25 (plus postage). An autographed copy would provide a nice gift. Call (713) 652-2999, LaNette Upp.

ORGANIST POSITION First United Methodist Church of Crystal Lake seeks organist for 1200-member & growing suburban Chicago-arca church. Must be familiar with 25 rank Casavant tracker organ (1979). Duties include: providing music for two Sunday services and accompanying adult choir rehearsals. Base salary: $7,000. Position availahle: January 1, 1992. Send cover letter and resume to: Mrs. Susan White, Chairman, Search Committee, First United Methodist Church, 236 W. Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

CHRISTIANS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES can enjoy fellowship, understanding, and support from one another. Join this nationwide network. More information: Christian Counselors, Inc., Box 643, Basin, WY 82410.

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William B. Oden, bishop
Donald C. Cottrill, council director-editor
Sarah S. Kreutziger, associate editor
Louisiana United Methodist
527 North 8lvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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A Very Special Christmas

William B. Oden

This is a very special Christmas for the Oden family. Marilyn and I have all our children, our children's spouses and our grandchild together with us in Baton Rouge. This is the first time since we have moved to Louisiana that this has happened.

We are enjoying being together, sharing our gifts, catching up; but most important just being present with each other.

Christmas is a season of being connected. In fact, that is the essence of its meaning. Through the birth of Christ, God connected with humanity in a new way. Through the ministry of Christ, the Church was born and humanity connected with each other.

May God's blessings be upon you during this season and know that our love for you is a part of this connectedness.

William B. Oden

Wave the banners!
Fly the balloons!
Let the trees clap their hands!
And the stars burst in the universe!
And let the still, quiet voice be heard —

Christ has come!

© 1991 By Bettie Wilson Story
Central Illinois Conference

Celebrate the full meaning of Christmas

By HELEN BROWN
Maitland, Missouri

A viewpoint

We've not recovered from feasting too lavishly at a Thanksgiving dinner when we begin to hear the familiar strains of much-loved Christmas carols reminding us that the holiday season is fast approaching. Conversation is filled with thoughts of Christmas, such as — "What do you want for Christmas?" or "Do you have your shopping done?" or "Are you going home for Christmas?"

Quickly we are caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season. Endless gift lists are made and checked, and much time is consumed finding the perfect gift for each person. Sometimes the spirit of Christmas seems forgotten as we encounter the many throngs of weary shoppers.

Several years ago it was popular to change the word "Christmas" to the abbreviated form "Xmas." It seemed to expedite the writing of the yearly season's greetings to family and friends. But in our haste we neglected to include the most important part of the word.

To leave Christ out of Christmas meant we were forgetting the very reason why we celebrate December 25th. Perhaps we've become so preoccupied with material holiday preparations that we have neglected to take time to prepare our hearts anew for the coming of the Christ Child.

Yes, Christmas is a festive time of the year — a time set aside for loving and sharing. But have we included the most important one on our gift list? Have we forgotten to select a gift for the one whose birthday we celebrate?

Nearly two thousand years ago humankind received the greatest gift ever given — "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). We seldom hear the word "free" in our strained economy of today, but this gift from God is free — it cannot be bought with money or earned with good deeds, for it is only through God's love and grace that we can receive it. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:3).

We should include the gaiety and merriment of the season as tradition decrees. But let's remember to set aside a time to "unwrap" ourselves from the tinsel, glitter, paper, and ribbon and open our hearts to receive the precious gift of Jesus and then to give Him the gift of ourselves as we allow him to be the Lord of our lives. Then these words of Scripture might be a fitting description of us: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

Let's not allow an "X" to take away the full meaning of Christmas. Fill Christmas with Christ!

The Christmas Story

★
It came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed: And this taxing was first made when Quirinius was governor of Syria, and all went to be taxed every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered and she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.
Luke 2:1-7

— Grace Lutheran Church
Richmond, IL

Christmas can be lonely without Dad

By DANA E. JONES
Northern Illinois Conference

Lori looks at the jacket Heather wants for Christmas. If she puts it in layaway, she may not be able to pay for it by Christmas.

She remembers last year when she went shopping with her husband; then she remembers the separation. She's been on her own for nine months.

Karen listens to the radio's eclectic choice of holiday music as she counts and recounts the screws and bolts for Peter's new bike. The refrain of "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" rings in her ears as she unsuccessfully tries to assemble the bike's chain.

Playing Santa alone at 2 a.m. isn't fun.

Susan picks up a few scraps of wrapping paper as she begins taking down the Christmas tree. Her ex-husband picked up Kim a few hours ago even before she'd finished pulling cellophane from her gifts.

Already the house seems quiet.

Being a single mom at Christmas can dull the shine of the treetop stars. Nostalgic family stories — real or imagined — lose their magic.

Christmas is an ideal time for the church to reach out to single moms but what I've learned after seven Christmases as a single mom is that too often it is a time when the church is absent.

Following are suggestions from single moms for how the church and its members can brighten the holidays for single moms in their congregations, neighborhoods and communities.

• Christmas, like no other time of the year, calls upon parents to be super parents. For single moms, that can compound already overwhelming loads.

Single-handedly, they must shop for kids and family, sometimes even paying for gifts from the kids for ex-husbands. They must decorate the house.

My son always wants outdoor lights that I don't know how to hang. And thank goodness for a granddad who bails us out when we buy the heaviest, crookedest tree on the lot.

Even for moms who are expertly handy around the house, there are just too many things for one person to do.

You can help relieve the overload. Offer to go with a single-mom friend to buy a tree or bake her cookies for a cookie exchange or school party. Take a covered dish to her on an especially busy evening or offer to babysit so she can shop. Provide a day of handyperson services.

You can even mail her Christmas cards for her.

• Money is usually tight for single moms. It gets even tighter at Christmas.

Saving dollars by making gifts is difficult for those who work outside the home all day then come home to unshared parenting and housekeeping.

If your time allows, offer to make something for which the single mom buys the material. I had a wonderful friend who finished several counted-cross stitch pictures for me.

Take the kids on a holiday outing Mom can't afford — a trip to a zoo or nearby museum.

If you're going to be giving gifts to her children, consult with her about what they want. Your contribution toward a gift may help her play Santa in a way she couldn't manage alone.

• For single moms, Christmas is mostly giving. Even the most generous, unselfish mom will have moments of self-pity.

Do something just for her. Take her some pine-scented bubble bath or her favorite dessert. Send her a card. Treat her to a play or lunch.

Take her kids shopping and let them buy her small gifts or help them make and wrap something for Mom. Without another parent around, kids, especially young ones, often don't have any way to get a present for Mom.

• For single moms without extended family nearby, Christmas can be lonely.

Include her and her children in your family. Invite them for dinner, caroling or to share in one of your special traditions.

My son has several special angels — United Methodist Women who periodically send him cards. That really is the family of Christ in action.

• Single moms may find it hard to attend children's programs where they are confronted by what appears to be row upon row of two-parent families. It's really lonely sitting there while your children wait backstage.

You can offer to go with a single mom to a school Christmas concert, a holiday recital or church pageant; you can share in her delight with her children's performances.

• Single moms don't get many social invitations at Christmas. While there is much concern for single men who spend Christmas alone, dinner invitations for single moms and their children are few.

Find ways to include them in holiday meals, open houses and parties.

• Christmas Eve worship services are often planned as family time. It's tough for single moms to sit in a congregation full of two-parent families who race home as soon as the service is over.

My church served coffee, punch and cookies after service last year. My son and I had a chance to visit with our church family. We were all amazed at how many folks lingered to talk.

• Christmas is prime time for visiting Dad, who often picks up the kids even before the turkey has settled. That can mean a suddenly quiet, empty house that just moments before was filled with the kids' noisy holiday excitement.

My folks have made a habit of being with me when my son is picked up. It really helps. Moms who put kids on trains, planes or buses bound for Dad's can use a friend to go to the station or airport with them.

Even a single mom who looks forward to the time alone may appreciate a call or two while the kids are gone. Consider inviting her to dinner or a movie.

• Most importantly, pray with her and for her during the holiday season.

Advent is a time of preparation, a time of waiting for a child to be born. Advent always reminds me of the nine months I waited for my son's birth. I remember the excitement when his father and I brought him home.

The first Christmas I was alone with my son, I couldn't set up my Advent wreath. Then my pastor asked us to be the first "family" to light a candle in our church's wreath.

It is frightening to wait alone for the coming of a child and for the coming of each new phase of his or her life. How fearful Mary, a single, unwed mother must have been when she learned she was pregnant.

Not all single moms will have the same needs during the Advent and Christmas season, but all will appreciate the love and friendship of the church in action. When you remember the single moms around you, you will take an important step in making Christmas truly a celebration for the whole family of Christ.

Christmas: Memories, Reflections, Family

"Christmas is a family celebration with a religious core," said the Rev. Bentley Sloane as he and other long-time servants of the Church reflected recently on their special memories and experiences of Christmas in ministry. Indeed, his association of Christmas and family life was echoed by several of the five people interviewed.

Mrs. Janelle McCammon, an active member of the Louisiana Conference as well as the widow of the Rev. Bob McCammon, said that she is always with her family during the holiday season. Mrs. Irene Reed, another surviving spouse of a clergyman, agreed that family was also very important to her.

This is especially true this year for the Rev. Jolly Harper and his wife Marie. They will celebrate 60 years of married life on Christmas day with their two children, six grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and friends at First United Methodist Church in Natchitoches.

They married one special Christmas day, Mr. Harper stated, because that "was as quick as we could do it." At that time, the Annual Conference met in November, he finished seminary in December and he started his first appointment in January. "We squeezed the wedding in between all those other exciting events," he said. This Christmas, then, he points out, also is the anniversary of their 60 years in ministry.

The Rev. Robert Harrington, another "retired" minister still in the active ministry, also related his most memorable Christmas to what was happening in his career. Twenty years ago, he served as the first Black District Superintendent of the newly merged Louisiana and Central Conferences. "That Christmas, the first following the merged Annual Conference, was very special," he said. "We had walked the high road and we could feel the warmth and response."

Dr. Harrington also believes that his service as Associate Pastor at the multi-ethnic Cornerstone church in New Orleans is legacy of that event. As he looks over his 54 years of ministry, he joyfully recounts that neither he nor his family ever "experienced one negative incident on the part of United Methodists."

Mrs. McCammon likewise remembers many positive things about the holiday season and their ministry. In 1980, after the death of her husband in October, the congregation at First United Methodist Church in Lafayette, established a memorial Chrismon Tree during the first Sunday in Advent to honor the man who took great care in the preparation of the Chrismon Tree in that church. Since then she and the other members have a service every holiday season in honor of her husband's work. "Every Christmas is a wonderful thing," she said.

Mrs. Reed echoed that sentiment. She "rejoices every Christmas for the one who gave us the Christ child," she said. There were many Christmases when "there were no material things that we could count on, but there was always gladness in my heart for me and my family."

She recounts that one Christmas, after a storm had blown the church down, the members met in their home. "After the collection was taken for the weekly salary, we realized that there would be only 40 cents left for Christmas. I didn't worry," she continued, "and sure enough, someone invited us for dinner. It was a wonderful time."

What Christmas means to me

By TIM JONES-YELVINGTON
(age 9)

Being a child of a single Mom at Christmas time means:

■ Not being able to have my dad be Santa at my school party.

■ Not having anyone but my mom and dog there when we open gifts.

■ Not having anyone to go Christmas shopping for my mom with.

■ Not having anyone to help put up lights and decorations. And hoping Mom won't lose her temper trying to put up the tree if it's too heavy.

■ Not having anyone to help cook and eat a big fancy Christmas dinner.

■ Not having anyone to go Christmas caroling with because my mom doesn't sing very well.

■ Getting to light every Advent candle because there's just my mom and me.

■ Not having my dad at my school Christmas concert because he lives too far away.

■ Coming home to a real quiet house after church on Christmas Eve.

Fortunately, my grandparents help out a great deal with all these things. But some kids aren't as lucky as I am.

So help out and make this Christmas the best a child of a single mom ever had.

Congratulations

The Reverend and Mrs. Robert A. Weber (Anita) are the parents of a new baby, Jonathan Robert, born December 2nd. Jonathan weighed 9 lbs. 2 ozs. Mr. Weber is the pastor of Benton United Methodist Church.

Merry Christmas from the Louisiana Conference Staff

Editorials

Intertwining religion, 'life' during 1991

Quickly, now—what do war, sex and the hreakup of a superpower nation have in common?

If you said "religion," pat yourself on the back.

In the opinion of the Reporter's editorial staff, some of 1991's most significant religious news stories were inseparable from the year's top secular news events.

Indeed, few 12-montb periods in recent memory contained as many "crossover" stories, tbat is, events of comparable significance for both secular and religious media.

What tbis says is what we in the Christian community long have maintained: Our spiritual lives and our day-to-day "real" lives are inextricably intertwined.

In fact, our witness that "the Word became flesh" is nothing if not a prophetic testimony to God's active presence in the midst of worldly affairs.

Here, in no priority, are what we believe were the year's most significant examples of the intertwining of the religious and the secular:

■ **Operation Desert Storm.** The U.S.-led multinational action against Iraq fueled intense debate among Cbristians worldwide regarding the morality of war and relations with people of other faitbs.

Can war ever be "just"? Was Desert Storm a "just war"? What is the relationship, historic and modern, between Cbristianity and Islam? How important is interfaith dialogue to Christian witness?

Horrible as war is, Desert Storm at least can be credited witb moving countless Christians to passionate encounters with such profound spiritual and moral questions. However, it's a sad sign of our sin that it took a war to stir such passion.

■ **Sex.** Name almost any sex-related issue and it made headlines during 1991: sexual harassment (Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings), date rape (William Kennedy Smith trial), sexual conduct and AIDS (Magic Johnson), clergy sexual misconduct (numerous), in addition to major sexuality studies released by various mainline denominations.

The proliferation of sex-related issues paraded before the public during 1991, often on television in graphic detail, posed a challenge troubling for many Christians: How to deal puhlicly with a topic traditionally considered a matter for "private" moral decision-making?

If 1991 clarified anything about the inherent complexity of sexual issues, however, it was that Christians dare not retreat from dealing openly witb dilemmas rooted in sex-related tensions. Rather, widespread public concern about sucb tensions creates an unusually receptive moral climate for the church's historic witness: Sex is a good hut potent gift from God whose use demands our best spiritual insight and most rigorous moral discipline.

■ **The Soviet Union's demise.** As a direct result of that demise, two major challenges attracted significant Christian attention and involvement during 1991.

First, signs of suppressed spiritual hunger are burgeoning in the region, presenting unprecedented opportunities for Christian witness and mission.

Second, an acute food shortage and distrihution crisis in the former Soviet republics pose a challenge to church relief efforts.

Chaotic political conditions in the republics create uncertainty about bow or even if Christians from tbe outside can stay in contact witb sisters and brothers in what was the Soviet Union. Commitments to do so by various church bodies, including The United Methodist Church's global missions board, are faithful to the gospel mandate to sbare the story of God's love "to the ends of the earth."

Life and death dilemmas. Anti-abortion protests in Wichita, Kans., a controversial "suicide machine," a best-seller book about how to commit suicide, and a first-ever state referendum on permitting physician-assisted suicide—these were among 1991 beadline makers related to the morality of life-and-death decision making.

The religious community was, and must continue to be, deeply involved in the public dehate about such issues. For Christians, a major challenge posed by the debate is bow to avoid a tendency toward polarization, both within the church and in society at large, and create a climate for constructive dialogue.

Health care. Rhetoric of would-he presidential candidates about the need for government to deal with rising bealtb-care costs reflects growing impatience with exorhitant insurance premiums and medical expenses. During 1991, most major church bodies cited such costs as a key factor threatening their ability to fund more traditional ministries.

To the church's credit, it has been a leading voice in identifying the health-care crisis and in calling for public policy to meet it.

Christians have a vital role to play in treating the crisis as an issue of justice. Among other things, the crisis challenges the church to reclaim its role as a "healing place" where spiritual and physical bealth are integrated. But it also prompts searching questions such as:

Is health care a human right?

Given limited health-care resources, how sbould their allocation be decided and by whom?

Is the parable of the Good Samaritan merely a guide for individual moral conduct in caring for others, or can it apply to the moral obligations of institutions such as government?

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY SPURGEON M. DUNNAM III

A baptism at a newly formed United Methodist Church in the former Soviet Union dramatizes the spiritual hunger burgeoning in the region. Some of 1991's most significant religious news stories were inseparable from the year's top secular news events such as the demise of the Soviet Union.

Disaster 'watchfulness': Good idea

The Reporter's series of articles on natural disasters in California points to a warning for us all (see issues of Dec. 6, 13, 20 and elsewhere in tbis issue):

As Jesus said about the poor, disasters will always be with us.

This reality poses two opposing alternatives.

We can deny that natural disasters like those in California can strike us wberever we live.

Or we can acknowledge that disasters can happen to anyone anywhere and prepare accordingly.

We strongly recommend the second alternative.

That may prove difficult for some of us. Many people consider disaster preparedness a good idea hut not something to worry about. Others prefer to believe that we control our lives and "it can't happen to me."

"It" can happen, however.

Hence, reasonahle precautions—part of the "watchfulness" consistently encouraged by Scripture—are realistic expressions of Christian compassion for ourselves and for others in a disaster-prone world.

United Methodists, among others, are extraordinarily competent in botb immediate and long-term disaster response because of decades of experience helping people in need.

As a result, local congregations need not re-invent the wheel but should prepare instead for disasters by using already existing structures.

Here are two ways to begin:

Tap connectional relationships. Ties between local congregations, annual conferences and general agencies provide an effective network for sharing and acquiring key organizational skills. For example, each annual conference's disaster response committee can educate local congregations in how to prepare for disasters. Learn who is on this committee and request their assistance.

Consult the United Methodist Committee on Relief. This agency is widely known as the church's frontline response to disaster. But UMCOR also trains people in disaster preparedness and will provide on-site assistance to annual conferences in developing a plan for disaster response in your area.

For information, contact Virginia Miller, manager of the disaster response network, at the General Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115.

Here I Stand

We need God to heal our memories

By VADA M. GIPSON

How much of the world's turmoil stems from trouhles that happened years and years ago—centuries, if not millennia?

During 1992, the western hemisphere will be acknowledging its "discovery" by Christopher Columhus 500 years ago.

That reminds me of a cartoon showing two Native Americans looking seaward at three little ships. The caption reads: "Oh, oh. Here comes trouble!"

If any race on earth should hold animosity toward another, Native Americans should. Witb few exceptions, however, most want to live in peace and harmony.

At tbe time I'm writing, a "Mid-East Peace Conference" is being attempted, with historical enemies sitting at the same table.

When the Jews were captured and carried off to Babylon in 586 B.C., some were left behind. They intermarried with indigenous tribes, thereby creating a mixed race which was looked down upon by the returning Jews in 433 B.C. Also, some stayed behind in Babylon (present day Iraq) and intermarried with people of that country—the land of Abraham's hirth.

Long before the captivity, Abraham's first-born son, Ishmael, married an Egyptian woman and had 12 sons. They lived in the land now known as Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia.

So, while being members of the same families, the people of those countries have been fighting all tbese thousands of years, making pacts and breaking them.

Are hostile memories being handed down from generation to generation all over the world?

Consider Ireland and long-standing hostilities between Catholics and Protestants. And think about the many European countries within the last two years trying to keep or rediscover their historical identities in the face of a trouhled past.

What if everyone who believed in the power of prayer would pray for the healing of hostile, hurtful memories throughout the world?

What if the unhappy memories of the peoples of the world could be wiped out?

What if one generation passed to the next memories of reconciliation and none of animosity?

During the Christmas season, when we celebrate the angels' message to lowly shepherds about the birth of the Prince of Peace, let us pray for a worldwide healing of bad memories.

"Here I Stand" is a forum through which UMR readers may express opinions and concerns about issues facing the church. Vada M. Gipson is a member of Fort Jones UMC, Fort Jones, Calif. (California-Nevada conference).

Send manuscripts (maximum two and one-half typed, double-spaced pages) to UMR, P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, Texas 75266-0275.

Faithfully yours

Worshiping *vroom* at O'Hare Airport made my *Vroom!*

The roar of an American Airlines jet nearly drowned out the public address announcement I was straining to hear during a recent stopover at Chicago's busy O'Hare Airport.

Stephen Swecker

What I managed to hear was something like: "Worship services *vroom vroom* 12 noon *vroom* airport chapel *crackle boom* welcome *vroom crackle boom boom* thank you *VROOM!*"

Reasonably sure that I'd just heen invited to church, I perked up. It was late Sunday morning, but my travel schedule had kept me from attending a regular worship service.

After a little detective work reading the airport floor plan, I located the chapel. It was in another terminal, a five-minute hike from wbere I was standing, but there was still time to make it.

I was glad I did.

Promptly at noon, the Rev. Paul F. DeVries, the airport chaplain, strode briskly into the small glass-walled chapel and called 10 of us wayfaring strangers to worship.

Greeting his transient flock, Paul exuded a hearty but soothing hospitality. I quickly felt at home despite my mild concern about getting out in time to make my flight.

He read my mind. Paul immediately reassured us that we'd he finished in no more than 30 minutes. "No way," I said to myself.

But then, after his wife, Jean, distributed copies of the one-page worship service, the Reformed Church in America minister crisply led us in prayers, responses and lessons from the Old and New Testaments.

I was becoming impressed. Paul's no-nonsense style showed sensitivity to his congregation of travelers. No words were wasted, but neither was there a sense of haste.

Still I doubted anyone could preach a meaningful sermon in the few minutes available. Paul proved me wrong.

A master of homiletical soundbites, he spoke for seven minutes. His topic was "thanksgiving."

"The gifts of God lead us to the God of gifts."

"You don't go after goodness and mercy head-on. You go after something else ... and goodness and mercy find you."

"God's mercy keeps from you what you deserve. God's goodness gives you what you don't deserve."

After the sermon, Paul asked us to introduce ourselves, tell where we were coming from and where we were going. Finally, he blessed and dismissed us in the name of Christ.

Vroom boom crackle VROOM!

I looked at my watch. The promised 30 minutes were exactly up. But what rich minutes they'd been!

Travel advisory: If you're ever passing through Chicago on a Sunday near noon (or 10 a.m. or 2 p.m.) and seeking a place to worship God, you could do worse than the chapel at O'Hare Airport, Terminal 2.

Among its blessings are a vibrant witness to God's presence amid the *vroom vroom* of our too-busy world and a refreshing reminder tbat, when we need spiritual refueling, less really can be more.

—*STEPHEN L. SWECKER*

Mr. Swecker is the Reporter's Faith Forum Page Editor.

Letters to the Editor

I admired Spurgeon Dunnam's standards, faith

I was sbocked to read of the death of Spurgeon M. Dunnam III (see UMR, Dec. 6).

I never met Dr. Dunnam and only saw him once on a panel of tbe 1980 Religious Communications Congress in Nashville.

As a subscriher to the Reporter for many years, I came to admire bis high standards of journalism and deptb of Christian commitment. I rely on the newspaper as tbe best source for news on the American religious scene.

It is consistently accurate and fair in its reporting. I am sure tbe present staff will be able to continue tbis same tradition that Spurgeon Dunnam III so ahly began.

David Sumner
Muncie, Indiana

How to 'have church'

As I've beard said, "there's a difference in going to church and having churcb."

But how do we get to the point of "having church?"

For more than 46 years of my life I went to church. A year and a balf ago I had tbe experience of "having church," and it didn't happen in a church but rather at a festival called Creation.

What opened tbe doors to my heart? The Spirit of God flowing through the musicians and speakers and the thousands of my fellow Christians camped around me is wbat shook me loose. Why can't we have this Spirit as active every Sunday in church?

I've spent a lot of time with Christian music flowing through me since the summer of '90. Music is a very strong force in getting our emotions flowing and until we "up" tbe emotions, we have a hard time letting the Spirit move us.

We need to take a very strong look at our form of worship within the four walls of our churches to know wby we are not growing in spirit and numbers. We keep on ignoring God's gifts of talent in his musicians, lighting and sound technicians, and other communication advancements of this age.

Yes, God created them, so why don't we use them to his honor and glory in church?

George E. Taylor
East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

Why those articles?

I love the United Methodist Church but I don't understand the need for the liberal articles in the Reporter, particularly on Page 2.

Harbert Thornton
Brownsville, Tennessee

Editorial missed points

Well, there we don't go again!

Your editorial in the Nov. 22 issue is a case in point. For him, Ervin "Magic" Johnson's tragedy is beyond description. For us, another loss of a popular sports figure unbalances our precarious lives.

Without challenge, Mr. Johnson is becoming the accepted spokesperson for AIDS even by our church newspaper. He is not the spokesperson to trot out, and his message is not the message to proclaim.

There are points which you have glossed over and simply missed. For example, promiscuity, amorality and a lack of honesty have allowed venereal disease to become a plague. Health care systems will not be able to bear the burden.

Our blood supplies are threatened. Innocent victims are dying. Suspicion abounds. AIDS may bring changes in social, economic and political order.

The tragedy is that we are adding to our own demise. We are not asking tough questions nor providing clear answers.

Reed C. Justus
Hewitt, Texas

Language is changing

In response to Daun Metz's query in the Nov. 29 Reporter, we cannot "turn God into a woman" or a man, for that matter.

While we think God transcends our notion of sexuality, we have to profess ignorance of his (or her) nature in that regard. However, we do know God speaks to males and females equally and without bias.

It is the patriarchal aspect of the Judeo-Christian tradition that we do hope is changing and inclusive language is a part of that change.

Sandra W. Clark
Houston, Texas

Know your Bible?

Find the location in the Bible—book, chapter, verse—of the following:

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Book	*Chapter*	*Verse*
	:	

(Last week's answer: 1 Timothy 1:15)

Readings for week of Dec. 30

Monday: Psalms 111:1-4a
Tuesday: Psalms 111:4b-10
Wednesday: 1 Samuel 2:18-20,26
Thursday: Luke 2:41-45
Friday: Luke 2:46-52
Saturday: Colossians 3:12-13
Sunday: Colossians 3:14-17

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Spurgeon M. Dunnam III, Editor and Chief Executive
Daniel J. Louis, General Manager
John A. Lovelace, Managing Editor
Darrell L. Bryant, Conference Editions
Stephen L. Swecker, Faith Forum Page Editor
Kay Fielder, Local Editions

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The Reporter maintains an independent editorial policy aimed at providing a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of United Methodism. Editorial opinions are not necessarily those of the publisher or the conferences served by the Reporter but represent the views of the Reporter's editorial staff. Signed letters and opinion articles reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Reporter staff. Paid ads are screened before acceptance but are not editorially endorsed.

Faith watch

ASSISTING MOTHERS: Mothers with AIDS in Tacoma, Wash., will be able to live with their children, thanks to help from fraternity members at a United Methodist-related school. The Kappa Sigma Fraternity at The University of Puget Sound, under direction of a professional contractor, is helping renovate a house for single women with AIDS. They also will revamp and maintain the yard. After the house becomes habitable in January, fraternity members will seek to respond to residents' ongoing requests for help. The students plan a fund-raising event for the families next semester.

WILLING TO GIVE: Congregational statistics reveal that 3,500 Presbyterians made bequests to local churches during 1990. According to information compiled by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) researchers, 2,234 congregations received $66,987,370 through gifts in wills. The total amount given to congregations in 1990 exceeded the total for 1989 by more than $3 million—an increase of 4.7 percent. The average bequest was $18,659, almost 20 percent more than the average in 1989.

EXCEEDING MISSION GOAL: At least 82 percent of Southern Baptist churches are involved in some type of ministry to needy people, according to new research conducted by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Results indicate that Southern Baptists, without realizing it, have exceeded the denomination's "Bold Mission Thrust" goal of 75 percent of Southern Baptist Convention churches involved in ministry projects by the year 2000.

COUNCIL ELECTS OFFICERS: The Protestant Church in Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) elected Bishop **Klaus Engelhardt** its chairman at the recent reunited synod meeting in Bad Wildungen, Germany. The area includes 24 denominations or other church groupings with a membership of 29 million. **Johannes Hempel** of Dresden, Germany—the 62-year-old bishop of the biggest church in East Germany (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Saxony) was appointed as deputy. Representing the 1.3 million evangelicals on the council is German television news anchor **Peter Hane**. The Protestant theologian also serves on the main board of the German Evangelical Alliance.

'BIKING FOR BUCKS': **Steve Bentley** of Cincinnati recently bicycled some 855 miles to outdistance 13 other cyclists to the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tulsa, Okla. They were on something of a bike-a-thon to raise funds for the church's race and poverty program. The project raised almost $14,000 in pledges and donations, half of which will support the church's general reconciliation fund. The remainder goes to finance projects in participants' home regions.

DISPUTE FLARES: A dispute between a number of lay leaders in the Greek Orthodox Church who emphasize democratic understanding and clergy who emphasize a strongly hierarchical understanding of church life reached a sharp point recently. Archbishop **Iakovos**, primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, dismissed the elected parish council at Annunciation Cathedral and ordered its replacement by an interim council appointed by Bishop Methodios of Boston. Appointment of an interim council, consisting of former presidents of the parish council, was immediately challenged by the elected body.

PROPOSAL DENIED: The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., voted against a proposal to restore funds to a controversial Swiss seminary, marking the final step in a two-month battle between U.S. fundamentalists and supporters of the school. The decision represents a loss of $365,000 to the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and got a swift denunciation from a Swiss Baptist leader. The Rev. **John David Hopper**, seminary president, described the action as a disaster for Baptist relationships.

Compiled from news and staff reports

California UMs warn: Prepare for disasters

Two years of disasters prompts church leaders to turn experiences into response manual

By CYNTHIA B. ASTLE
Associate Editor

OAKLAND, Calif.—United Methodists in northern California warn congregations everywhere:

Wherever you are, you are at risk from something—and you'd better get ready for it!

Two years of consecutive disasters—the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the 1990 drought and San Joaquin Valley freeze and the 1991 Oakland firestorm (see UMR, Dec. 6, 13, and 20)—have prompted California-Nevada Annual Conference leaders to turn their agonies into a useful teaching tool.

A conference task force is at work on a manual for disaster preparedness that provides information on how to respond most effectively to whatever kind of disaster may befall.

See related editorial on page 2.

'Don't do much'

"Preparedness is something we don't do much about," said the Rev. Craig Paterson, a former staff member of Church World Service, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches, who has served as the California-Nevada disaster response liaison.

"What United Methodist churches should do is become experts on risks their communities face and determine what steps will be helpful to reduce risks to life and property."

The Rev. David Schlager, pastor of El Sobrante United Methodist Church in Richmond, Calif., serves as the conference chair of world missions. His committee oversees the distribution of relief funds.

"Each disaster is unique," Mr. Schlager told the Reporter. "An earthquake is not a fire, and a fire is a not a flood. But certain things can be common to every disaster situation."

At El Sobrante, he said, there is a disaster plan for the congregation. It specifies where the office will move, where and how the congregation will worship, how families will receive aid.

Ask questions

"Every district superintendent everywhere ought to be asking these kinds of questions of congregations," Mr. Schlager asserted.

For instance, consider the experience of the Rev. Nadine DeWitt Droke.

Now superintendent of the Bayview District which includes Oakland where the Oct. 20 firestorm occurred, Ms. Droke was pastor of First United Methodist Church in San Jose, Calif., when that church's 80-year-old sanctuary burned during Holy Week this year.

"Someday I'll do a workshop on what NOT to do in a disaster," Ms. Droke joked.

One of the simplest things to avoid, she advised, is overloading the parsonage telephone asking for status reports on the disaster.

"The fire started two days after Palm Sunday," she explained. "It took them until Good Friday to put the fire out. I got 5 or 6 hours of sleep that entire week."

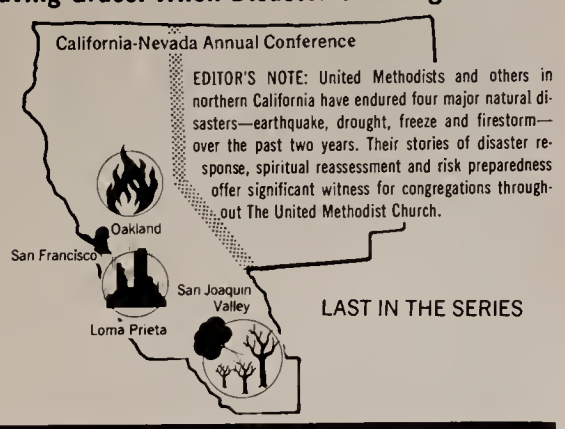
Drawing upon their experience in the 1989 earthquake and Ms. Droke's experience with a church fire, she and Mr. Schlager are watching the Oakland firestorm relief efforts for those who might "fall through the cracks."

"Because of our previous experience, we now know who and what to look for," Ms. Droke said.

Mr. Schlager added: "One of the great pastoral things I've learned [from California's succession of disasters] is that control is an illusion.

"The elements of nature are enormous, but God is bigger than they are!"

Saving Grace: When Disaster Challenges Faith



EDITOR'S NOTE: United Methodists and others in northern California have endured four major natural disasters—earthquake, drought, freeze and firestorm—over the past two years. Their stories of disaster response, spiritual reassessment and risk preparedness offer significant witness for congregations throughout The United Methodist Church.

LAST IN THE SERIES

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.—A front-end loader, moving supplies around a downtown construction site, reminds passers-by that the damage from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake is not repaired more than two years later. Congregations elsewhere also must be prepared to deal with lingering impacts when disasters strike their communities.

Where would you worship if calamity struck your church?

Reporter Staff Special

OAKLAND, Calif.—Church leaders working on the California-Nevada Annual Conference disaster preparedness manual offer these broad guidelines as discussion starters for church disaster plans:

■ **For what risks can we reasonably prepare?**

In California, for instance, earthquakes are likely. But in Florida, the more likely natural disaster is a hurricane. In the Midwest, the risk could be tornadoes. Congregations must assess their own areas.

■ **What needs to be done immediately?**

The Rev. David Schlager, chair of California-Nevada's world missions committee, said the pastor and lay leaders need to think creatively about what their immediate response to a disaster should be.

For any disaster, however, there are some basic questions. Among them:

✓ Are the church's records duplicated and safely stored somewhere off-site?

✓ How will the congregation worship if the sanctuary is damaged or destroyed?

✓ How will congregational leaders contact members to determine their safety and/or needs if telephones are not working?

■ **What other agencies are likely to provide disaster response services? How can the church effectively use and/or support those agencies?**

Among the groups that regularly respond to disasters, said Mr. Schlager, are the American Red Cross, the Civil Defense, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Salvation Army. Churches should find out what each agency provides, use their services if necessary or augment their services, he said.

■ **How do we organize an interfaith disaster response committee for our community?**

Federal guidelines state that any government relief must be channeled through an interfaith organization, not an individual church.

United Methodists in particular bring special abilities to interfaith organization because of their experience in ecumenical and connectional relationships, Mr. Schlager said. The United Methodist Committee on Relief is a primary resource for disaster preparedness training (see related editorial page 2).

■ **What pastoral and psychological issues are we likely to face in a disaster? How can we prepare for longterm support for such ministry?**

California-Nevada's committee intends to include suggestions for post-disaster worship liturgies in its manual, Mr. Schlager said.

"The spiritual and psychological impact of disasters lasts a long time," cautioned the Rev. Nadine DeWitt Droke, superintendent of the Bayview District.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

Congregation rethinks its spiritual values after fire

Reporter Staff Special

OAKLAND, Calif.—When disaster strikes your area, be prepared for life-changing effects that reach deeply into the soul.

That's the word from members of Downs Memorial United Methodist Church, where four families were made homeless by the Oct. 20 firestorm.

Downs Memorial is located in Oakland's "flats" near the San Francisco Bay, but its members live all around the area.

Downs members responded immediately to the firestorm's impact.

Before the fire was out, Downs Memorial members began making contributions for disaster relief, said the Rev. Douglass E. Fitch, pastor. Congregation leaders made sure that all families who were uprooted by the firestorm had a place to stay.

As chaplain to the Oakland Fire Department, Mr. Fitch counseled firefighters during the disaster's demanding days. The church also was the early headquarters for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Among the affected members was William Boone, a retired captain of the Oakland Fire Department, whose home was destroyed.

"What people don't realize is that there are people burned out who don't have insurance, don't have the resources to rebuild," stressed Mr. Boone.

"We bought our home in the hills 25 years ago; we'll do all right. But lots of people won't."

Downs Memorial's eagerness to aid firestorm victims, however, is accompanied by frustration, said Mr. Fitch.

"Everybody wants to help, but right now there isn't anything they can do," he explained. "What they need in that area are bulldozers."

The biggest impact from the firestorm, however, was the spiritual re-assessment it fostered in his congregation, the pastor continued.

"We discovered that the fire made us think about life issues," Mr. Fitch said. "We began to look at how much our own 'house' was in order or disorder. "We had a four-hour session during which we raised questions like: 'What does my life mean? Where are my priorities? What is God trying to say to us?' "

Three Sundays after the firestorm, Downs Memorial held its first early-morning "praise service." The resulting two hours of personal testimonies from worshippers—not all related to the firestorm's impact—caused Mr. Fitch to cut his usual 20-minute sermon to four.

"People came to me and said they needed to praise God amid all the disaster," Mr. Fitch told the Reporter afterward.

—CYNTHIA B. ASTLE

UMs join historic church delegation to Cuba

By LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

HAVANA—In a gesture of solidarity, United Methodists joined a National Council of Churches delegation meeting Dec. 9-12 with church representatives from Cuba.

The conference with the Cuban Ecumenical Council also included ecumenical representatives from Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Cuban Ecumenical Council, of which the Methodist Church of Cuba is a member, represents most Protestants, an estimated 10 percent of the population.

Bilingual discussions

Through worship and bilingual reflections and discussions, the 153 participants shared faith, ideas and strategies of how they could work together, particularly on behalf of Cuban Christians.

United Methodist Bishop Melvin E. Talbert (San Francisco Area) shared the image of God "hugging a world where there is alienation, misery, strife and pain" and how people of faith can provide a bridge "to let people know their lives can be made whole again."

Christians in Cuba have had a better relationship with the government in the past few years, particularly after a meeting between President Fidel Castro and Cuban Ecumenical Council representatives on April 2, 1990.

The culmination of this new acceptance came with the Fourth Party Congress last October, when it was decided that religious people could join the Communist Party.

Didn't seek membership

While Christians didn't ask for membership, according to the Rev. Raul Suarez, the decision is the party's admission it "had committed an error by associating the state with atheism."

Mr. Suarez is a former president of the Cuban Ecumenical Council.

But Cuban Christians are suffering the effects of shortages of food and other needed items along with the rest of the population. As the Rev. Jose Lopez, a Baptist pastor, explained, Cuban Christians who recite the Lord's Prayer literally are asking for daily bread.

Although Cuba's economic difficulties result from various conditions—including the collapse of the Soviet Union, its main trading partner for years—the U.S. government's longtime blockade is preventing access to food, medicines, oil and other essentials, Cuban Christians told the group.

Cuban Methodist Bishop Joel Ajo said the United States is using the blockade as a way of punishing Cuba for the "sin" of trying to liberate itself through socialism.

But Cubans are determined to retain positive achievements of the revolution, according to Bishop Ajo.

Historic moment

"In the majority of our people is patience and a determination to live through this historic moment," he said.

Cuban Christians are looking to their U.S. counterparts for understanding, Bishop Talbert said.

"In the midst of difficult times for the Cuban people, it is very important for us to affirm that universal quality of the church," he added.

United Methodist Bishop J. Lloyd Knox (Birmingham, Ala., Area) a former missionary in Cuba, agreed.

"This may well be the 'kairos moment' for the church in Cuba with new opportunities to share the gospel and impact the society," he said.

Bishop to church: Stop crying and start helping

By THOMAS S. McANALLY
United Methodist News Service

SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—United Methodists should "stop crying about what we don't have when millions of God's people have nothing," Bishop Felton E. May told members of the church's General Council on Ministries at their recent final meeting of the 1989-92 quadrennium.

In his presidential address to the General Council on Ministries, Bishop May said the church has the "wisdom, resources, creativity, mechanism and money.... What we need is the will to feed one another ... (and) do battle in the name of our Creator Lord."

The bishop expressed frustration at "blocks" in the church that he said have prevented the General Council on Ministries from fulfilling its mandate as a "crucible of creative engagement."

A recent opinion survey conducted by the council asked United Methodist leaders to identify 10 societal issues facing the denomination by the year 2000. Topping the list were racism, drug and crime, and the gap between rich and poor.

Expressing frustration at the council's inability to mobilize the church behind such issues, Bishop May asked, "Where do we pull in the collective wisdom and say, 'All right, this is the way it is; let's take the resources and run.' Who should sound the clarion call?"

The United Methodist REPORTER

Faith connections

BAKING A MINISTRY: Culinary skills of a United Methodist laywoman in Mississippi have cooked up thousands of dollars for her congregation's youth ministry. Since 1985, **Robbie Ray** of New Albany, Miss., has been baking cream cheese pound cakes, selling them, investing her proceeds and donating her investments to the youth fund of First United Metbodist Church in New Albany. Her efforts have gained the church nearly $29,000. Ms. Ray, daughter of a Methodist minister, said this is tbe fulfillment of a decision sbe made in 1985 after a near-fatal illness. "I decided that I wanted to do something constructive with my life," Ms. Ray told the "Mississippi United Metbodist Advocate" newspaper.

LAITY ADDRESS FINALISTS: Four finalists have been selected in the denominationwide searcb for a person to deliver the Laity Address at the church's 1992 General Conference. Cbosen by a 10-member committee from among 46 semi-finalists are: **Ruby G. Farish**, a member of Boston Avenue UMC in Tulsa, Okla.; **Thomas E. Isbell**, a member of First UMC in Anson, Texas; **Carol S. Minter**, a member of Southern Hills UMC in Tulsa; and **Joan Odell Sercl**, a member of First UMC, Sioux Falls, S.D. The final selection will be made Feb. 15 during the annual meeting of the National Association of Conference Lay Leaders in Nashville. The Laity Address will be delivered the morning of May 6 at General Conference in Louisville, Ky.

DOCTORATE AWARDED: **Stanley Hauerwas**, ethics professor at United Methodist-related Duke University, recently was awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree from The University of Edinburgh (Scotland). Dr. Hauerwas, a layman, is director of graduate studies at Duke Divinity School.

CHOIR SELECTION COMPLETE: A youth choir from Estonia, clergywomen from Pennsylvania, handbell ringers from Arkansas and across the nation, and senior citizens from Arizona are among 10 musical groups chosen to take part in the 1992 United Methodist General Conference May 5-15 in Louisville, Ky. **Brad Kisner** of Midland, Texas, director of music for the conference, said otber choirs will come from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and from Louisville itself. Groups will provide music for morning worship opening each day of the conference and at afternoon preaching services.

Compiled from news and staff reports

Ex-addicts tell how faith helped them recover

By DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL
Associate Editor

FORT WORTH, Texas—Local churches don't need "high tech" programs for people in recovery. Just "high touch."

Some 210 local church leaders from four Methodist denominations received that challenge during a recent event known as PAN-ACTS1—sbort for "Pan-Methodist Acts of Christian Witness, Training and Serving."

Former alcoholics and addicts told PAN-ACTS1 that tbe church must be more accepting of people in their spiritual journey of recovery if these people are to achieve a "revival of hope" (see related stories below).

'Active' and alcoholic

William C. Whiting III of Attleboro, Mass., said tbat wben he was an alcoholic be considered himself "an active United Methodist who worked on lots of committees, enjoying tbe social part of the church."

"But spirituality was not part of my framework," he said.

That, said Mr. Whiting, was when he lost faith in the church and left his local congregation.

But through a Christian-based alcohol recovery program, the United Methodist layman said he learned that "God had forgiven me and that God would teach me how to forgive myself.

"These were principles I had never heard expressed in church."

After a five-year absence, Mr. Whiting returned to United Methodism as a member of Mathewson Street UMC in Providence, R.I. He also became cbairperson of the Southern New England Annual Conference's Substance Abuse and Recovery Committee. That committee helps United Methodist churches respond to issues of chemical dependency and co-dependency through workshops, retreats, other educational programs and worship services.

Mr. Whiting said a bigh point in his ministry was being sent to represent his conference during a meeting in Washington, D.C., related to the United Methodist Bisbops' Initiative on Drugs and Violence.

"There I heard Bishop Felton May say that evangelism is tbe undergirding principle of tbe churcb's reaching the recovering community," said Mr. Whiting.

"What a tremendous affirmation that was! My conference substance abuse and recovery committee had reached that conclusion six months earlier. We are working bard on that principle of evangelism in Southern New England, and the results are encouraging."

"What evangelism bas done for me is unusual—only because so few people care to reach out to those in recovery," said Mr. Whiting.

"I pray that you will return to your homes and churches and do for other recovering people what some have done for me."

Another speaker, asking to remain anonymous, said the church must create programs for persons with addictive behavior that "reach out to the boys in the 'hood.

'Let them know you care'

"You've got to put your arms around the gang members and let them know you care."

The young man described how his addiction to drugs and violence caused him to kill rival gangs members and sell crack "just for the fun of it.

"It was all because of hate," said the young man, wbo was a member of the infamous Los Angeles-based Crypt gang in another city on the West Coast.

"That's all gang banging is about: hate. The only God I believed in was a Crypt God.

"We had dope addicts doing crazy things just for a little dope. We had one girl running tbrough the villa naked just for a little crumb [of crack].

"But now that I'm saved, I know it's not fun. It's sad."

'God really cares'

The young man changed his lifestyle after a co-worker invited him to church and said, "God has a plan for you. He cares; he really cares."

"At first I said, 'Are you crazy?' But then I started thinking about wbat he said, and it took six months for me to get to that churcb," said the youth. "I said, 'What could it hurt?' "

When the young man finally decided to attend Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the pastor rushed up to him in the sanctuary and hugged him.

He said be left the church tbat day with a good feeling that someone really cares for him and that "church is cool."

"They accepted me. Allen Temple really accepted me," said the youth.

"People say, 'What are we going to do about the gangs?' All you have to do is accept us before our hearts get hard and cold.

"To me, the time is now."

The meeting was sponsored by a pan-Metbodist coalition of persons from The United Methodist Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

REPORTER STAFF PHOTO BY DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

FORT WORTH, Texas—The Rev. Ignacio Castuera, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Hollywood, Calif., tells participants in PAN-ACTS1 that church people too often sit in judgment of people with drug and alcohol problems instead of demonstrating that God loves and forgives them. Church leaders from four Methodist denominations met in Fort Worth this month for a weekend training session on drug-abuse ministries.

Ex-user: 'Don't belittle addicts'

Reporter Staff Special

FORT WORTH, Texas—Former crack addict Phyllis Scott of Butler Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Tuskegee, Ala., said that throughout her journey on the road to recovery she could "look back and see that God had his merciful hand on me."

A mother of three children and the daughter of an active Methodist couple, Ms. Scott said she thought the drug was belping her cope with her self image, but "the drug made me go deeper in isolation.

"My pastor offered to place me in a treatment center,"she said. "Being an elementary educator with a college degree with honors, I was so insulted that I told him where he could take his treatment center."

"When you see the addict in the gutter, don't say, 'You've made your bed—now lie in it. Say 'There is hope for you yet.' "

Later she sought out ber pastor, the Rev. James E. Milton, for help, and he placed her in a church-related drug treatment center that used the 12-step program.

"These steps [taught at the center] incorporated God back into my life," said Ms. Scott.

"I was lacking a working relationship with God. I was the prodigal daughter that returned home. I was no longer dead but was alive. The void drugs filled could be filled by God and with love. "

After finally living a "drug-free" life, Ms. Scott said that she can now respond to other cries for help from addictive women as a volunteer in her church's drug program. Her goal is to open her own addiction center for women in the Tuskegee area.

"I stand before you today as a vision—a vision of hope," said Ms. Scott. "Don't belittle the addicts out there. Tbey need to be healed by your outstretched heart and Christ's outstretched hand.

"When you see the addict in the gutter, don't say, 'You've made your bed—now lie in it. Say 'There is hope for you yet.' "

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

Anorexic clergywoman: 'I was Mrs. God'

Reporter Staff Special

FORT WORTH, Texas—"I grew up in a church, in a good home, and lacked for nothing. But, like the prodigal son, I went off to a far country and lost my way . . . to social addictions and co-dependency."

The Rev. Susan A. Gray of Nashville said a person doesn't have to be "hooked poor" to be hooked on crack or alcohol or exhibit symptoms of addictive behavior.

An ordained minister on leave of absence from the United Methodist Tennessee Annual Conference, Ms. Gray told participants in PAN-ACTS1 recently that she was addicted to "social patterns" because she wanted to be accepted in her profession.

This desire to be "accepted," she said, caused her anorexic behavior.

Ms. Gray now teaches a Sunday School Bible study course at Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville that incorporates a 12-step program similar to that pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous. She is also writing devotional materials for people in Christian recovery programs.

"The distance was so great that I could not find my way back," she continued. "I could not find my way to my home, my family, my church or my bigher power. . . . When I came to myself I had lost my husband, my job, my healtb and my self confidence.

"Addiction is such a powerful disease . . . The things that I thought were helping me were only pulling me down."

"Addiction is such a powerful disease that it is pure irony," Ms. Gray continued. "The things that I thought were helping me were only pulling me down. . . . But I told myself I knew better tban God. In fact, I was Mrs. God."

—DENISE JOHNSON STOVALL

A CRITICAL FOOD EMERGENCY exists in Russia. Food lines are long. Many do not have the money to buy; others cannot wait in line because of age or handicaps.

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